

Heavenly - mindedness
AND
Earthly - mindedness,

IN TWO PARTS.

With an
APPENDIX
Concerning
Laying hold on Eternal life.

By JOHN ROWE.

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To the
R E A D E R.

IT is the chief point of Wisdom, to know what is true happiness : If we place happiness in that which is not happiness, we shall be deceived so much the more at last. The things of this world cannot be happiness to us, because the soul must live beyond them : when the soul is gone out of the body, it sees it self incircled with broad and vast Eternity ; and when it is in its separate state, it meets with none of those sensible Objects,

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To the Reader.

which it endavoured to suck contentment from, whilst it lived in the body: at what a loss then must that soul be for happiness, who knew no other happiness, but what was to be taken in from sensible things?

The designe of this small Tract is to put us upon the contemplation of that which must be happiness to us at last. It is no difficult thing for us to come in our thoughts, to the end of all those things which now we take comfort in: Life it self, and all the comforts of it, must shortly have an end. Now since all these things must have an end, a short and speedy end, it may not seem unreasonable for us to consider what the next state of things is like to be, and what it is that must make us happy at last. The things that
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To the Reader.

are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. *The minde of man is not quieted (neither indeed can it be) until it meets with something that will be happiness to it; and it never meets with happiness, until it findes all the good it would have, and also knows it shall have that good always, without diminution, intermission or cessation. God alone is an infinite and an eternal good. Nothing can be happiness to the reasonable creature, but to enjoy him as the chief good, and to acquiesce in him as its last end; and then is the minde quieted, when it comes to fix and rest in him. The scope of the whole Discourse is, to gather in our souls from sensible things unto God, and to fix them in the contemplation of that*
which

To the Reader.

which must be our happiness at last. That which was mainly designed in the first Part, which concerns Heavenly-mindedness, was to make some Essay how we might be brought to some suitableness and conformity to the life of Heaven, and to shew (so far as we could) how we might be led into the beginnings of that life here on earth: And that is the true reason, why that which concerns that Matter is more insisted on, and drawn out to a greater enlargement then might seem proportionable to the rest of the Discourse. The other Part, which concerns Earthly-mindedness, was not to be omitted, because it lyes so full in the Text; and too sad experience teacheth, that we need not more to be stirred up to the desire and love of eternal things, then we do need

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To the Reader.

to be warned against the love of this World, which is the great Rock upon which many Professors split their Profession; and indeed, the great obstacle which keeps them off from the pursuit of eternal things. All that I shall add more, is, that if Divine Grace help us to get up a little into the Spirit of the future life, I am perswaded we shall finde it the sweetest frame of spirit whilst we live, and to be sure, most comfortable to us when we come to dye. I doubt not, but upon experience this will be found true, that the firm and stedfast belief, the desire and expectation of eternal things, is much more sweet then the highest injoyment of temporal things: And it will be no grief of heart to us when we come to dye, that we have been a little acquainted

To the Reader.

quainted with, and in some sort accustomed unto that life here on earth, which must be our life when we enter into the other world, and must continue to be so unto Eternity.



THere is newly printed a Book, intituled, *The worm that dyeth not : Or, Hell-torments in the certainty and eternity of them*; plainly discovered in several Sermons preached on *Mark 9. 48.* by that painful and laborious Minister of the Gospel, *William Strong* : published by Dr. *Thomas Manton*, and Mr. *Jo. Rowe*. Sold by *Fran. Tyton*, at the three Daggers in Fleetstreet.

The



The first part,
Concerning
Heavenly - Mindedness.

Colos. Chap. 3. Vers. 1, 2.

Vers. 1. If ye then be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above,
where Christ sitteth on the right hand
of God.

Vers. 2. Set your affections on things a-
bove, not on things on the earth.



THe scope of the Apostle
in the whole context,
is to press us to the
great Duty of Heaven-
ly-mindedness. Calvin
observes, the Apostle
doth here exhort us to the meditati-

*Hic Paulus
Colossenses
hortatur ad
meditatio-
nem celestis
vite. Calv.
in Loc.*

on of the *Heavenly life*. We finde it very difficult for us to get up our hearts into Heaven: we are most prone to stick in this earth, and to rise no higher in our thoughts and affections then vilible things; and therefore there is great need that this duty of *Heavenly-mindedness* should be pressed upon us. Now the Apostle propounds his exhortation, whereby he presseth us to the Duty of *Heavenly-mindedness* two manner of ways.

1. Affirmatively.

2. Negatively.

I. Affirmatively, in two expressions.

1. *Seek those things which are above*, in the first Verse.

2. *Set your affections on things that are above*, in the second Verse. The

Verbum cogitandi magis exprimit assiduitatem studii, & vehementiam, ac si diceret, sit hac tota vestra meditatio, hac ingenuum, hac animam applicate. Calvin.

Apostle aims at one and the same thing in both expressions. *Seek those things that are above: Set your affections on things that are above:* All that the Apostle aims at in both is this, that he would have us to be *Heavenly-minded*; onely to inforce the exhortation the more, he repeats and doubles it; and the variation of the phrase adds some more weight to the

exhortation : we must not onely *seek*, but *set our affections* upon the things which are above. It is not enough for us to seek the things that are above in any manner, or after any sort, in a careless indifferent way ; but we must *set our affections* upon these things ; that is, our hearts must be taken up in them, these must be the great things that must take up our souls.

II. The Apostle having propounded this exhortation affirmatively, he comes to propound it negatively, at the latter end of the second Verse: *Not on things which are upon the earth: Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.* So that as the Apostles scope is to press us to *Heavenly-mindedness*, so his designe also is to press us to a holy contempt of this world, and to take us off from an inordinate minding of earthly things. The Spirit of God foresaw how prone our hearts were to be taken up with this world, and with earthly things ; and therefore he is *not* content to press us to the duty of *Heavenly-mindedness* in general, but

gives us an exprefs and particular caution againſt the love of the things of this world: *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.* Now then this being the Apoſtles ſcope to preſs us to *Heavenly-mindedneſs*, and to take us from *earthly-mindedneſs*, there are ſeveral Motives he uſeth in the context, to inforce theſe things upon us.

The *fiſt Motive* or *Argument* the Apoſtle uſeth to preſs this duty of *Heavenly-mindedneſs*, is taken from the conſideration of our *fellowſhip* or *communion* with Chriſt: *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above.* A Believer is riſen with Chriſt, and therefore he ought to ſeek the things which are above. Although Believers have not as yet attained to glory in their own perſons, yet they have attained it in the perſon of their Head: A Believer is riſen in Chriſt, aſcended in Chriſt, glorified in Chriſt his Head. Chriſts Reſurrection, Aſcention, Glorification, is a pledge and an earneſt of his Reſurrection, of his Aſcention, of his Glorification: Therefore eternal life and glory being ſecure to us in Chriſt,

Christ, and we having a right and title to it in our Head, it becomes us to set our hearts on that which is our proper inheritance. We are risen with Christ, that is, in Christ our Head; we have a right and title to Heaven and Glory: therefore Heaven and Glory being secure to us in Christ our Head, who hath taken possession of it in our name and stead, we ought to set our hearts upon that which is our great and proper inheritance. That is the first Motive, the consideration of our fellowship and communion with Christ; *we are risen with Christ*. A Believer hath glory already given him in his Head, he is destinated unto glory, and this his Head hath already taken possession of in his Name and stead.

The second Motive to press us to *Heavenly-mindedness*, and to take us off from *earthly-mindedness*, is taken from the consideration of our present state. A Believer's present state is a *dead state*: *Ye are dead*, saith he, *verse the third*. Seek the things that are above, set your affections on things that are above; *for ye are dead*.

Ye are dead; that is, dead to the world, dead as to any earthly happiness: Your happiness lyes not in the roade of this world. *Ye are dead*; that is, ye are like to dead men; though you have a life in this world, yet the life you have in this world as men (not to speak of your life as you are Saints) it is but a dead kinde of life; though you may have some comforts and enjoyments in this world as other men, yet they are all as dead comforts and enjoyments in comparison of what is your true happiness; your true happiness is to live with God and Christ. The Apostle hints so much, that true happiness is to live with God and Christ, as he saith afterward; *Your life is hid with Christ in God*; therefore your present life and comforts are all dead things in comparison of what is your true life and happiness. Now if a Believer be dead to the world, if all his happiness in this world be but the picture and shadow of true happiness, then it is all the reason that his heart should be taken off from earthly things, and set upon that which is indeed his happiness. The

The third consideration to press us to *Heavenly-mindedness*, is, that a Believers life is a *bidden life* : *You are dead, your life is hid with Christ in God.* A Believers true life, his true happiness, lyes not within sight, within view, it is *hid with Christ in God.* If we will finde out true happiness, we must not look for it in the roade of present sensible things, but we must look for it with Christ in God : *Your life is hid with Christ in God.* Mark it, if we would finde out true happiness, we must consider what it is that Christ as man, and as the Head of the Church, enjoys in the presence of the Father. A Believers happiness lyes in communion with his Head, in enjoying blessedness in communion with the Father, like unto that which Christ as man enjoys now in the presence of the Father. *Our life is hid with Christ in God* ; as much as if the Apostle had said, Your happiness lyes not in any thing in this world, but your happiness is of the same kinde as Christs happiness is : look what happiness Christ as man enjoys in the presence of the Father,

that is your happiness, and nothing else. Now this being a Believers true happiness, it concerns him to elevate his thoughts and affections unto the things that are above, *where Christ sits at the right hand of God.*

The fourth and last Motive the Apostle useth to press us to the duty of *Heavenly-mindedness*, is the consideration of the certainty that is given to a Believer of future glory. A Believer hath already a title to glory in Christ his Head; yea, after a sort, he hath an inchoate possession of it, forasmuch as Christ is possessed of Glory in his name and stead; but at last a Believer shall be brought to a full, perfect, compleat possession of glory in his own person, as now he hath it inchoatively in the person of his Head. This the Apostle intimates in the fourth verse: *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*; that is, we shall *actually* appear with him in glory; that is, as another Apostle expresseth it, *We shall be like him*, 1 Joh. 3.2. *We know when he shall appear,*

we shall be like him. Look what glory is given to Christ the Head of the Church, the same glory in a proportion shall be given to the Members. Now then the future happiness of the Saints being so sure, it being as certain that they shall have it, as if they had it in hand; the glory and happiness of Heaven being no notion, no fiction, but as sure as Christ is glorified, so shall all his Members be glorified; then certainly it becomes Believers to set their hearts upon these things. These are the Motives the Apostle makes use of to press the great duty of *Heavenly-mindedness* upon us.

The Observations that arise from the Text are these two.

It is the duty of Christians to seek Doct. 1.
after, and to set their affections on the
things that are above.

That Christians ought to have their Doct. 2.
hearts taken off from the world, and
from earthly things, and to have their
hearts carried forth to an holy contempt
of this world. Set your affections on
things that are above, not on things on
the earth.

That

Doct. 1. *That it is the duty of Christians to seek after, and to set their affections on the things that are above.*

For the Explication of this Doctrine, two things are to be spoken unto.

1. To shew what these *things above* are, that we are to seek after, and to set our affections upon.

2. What it is to seek after, and to set our affections on things that are above.

1. What are these things above that we are to seek after, and to set our affections upon?

This shall be opened in four Particulars.

I. By the *things above*, we are to understand God and Christ: we ought to seek the things that are above; that is, we ought to converse much in our thoughts with God and Christ. That these are the things above here intended, is clear from the Context: *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above: What follows? where Christ sits at the right hand of God; it is as much as if the Apostle had said, Christ is above, and God is above.*

above; now let your hearts be upon these things: *Seek the things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God*; that is, let your thoughts dwell much upon God and Christ. So at the third verse, *Your life is hid with Christ in God*: If our happiness lye hid in God and Christ, then we do *seek the things which are above*, when our hearts are mainly and principally carryed out after God and Christ, in whom onely our true happiness is to be found, 1 *Job.* 1. 3. *Truely our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* When may our fellowship be said to be with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? Certainly one way whereby we have fellowship with the Father and Jesus Christ, is this; when we converse much in our thoughts with God and Christ; that is, when God and Christ have more of our thoughts than any earthly thing. *My meditation of him shall be sweet, saith David*; then do we *seek the things above*, when our Meditation is taken up about God and Christ. *Job.* 17. 3. *This is life eternal,*

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to know thee the only true God, and
 Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent : The
 perfect knowledge of God and of
 Christ, is our perfect happiness in
 Heaven; and so much as we do know
 of God and Christ here on earth, so
 much happiness do we enjoy here on
 earth; there is more sweetness, more
 comfort, more satisfaction to be
 taken in from the knowledge of
 God and of Christ here on earth,
 then from all earthly enjoyments
 whatsoever: might it not seem too
 much for me to speak, I might ad-
 venture to say, Though it be but a
 little of God and Christ that I know,
 yet I would not exchange or part
 with the thoughts of God and Christ,
 which are to be had in this world,
 for all the Kingdoms upon earth.
 Now if the thoughts of God and
 Christ, and the little knowledge that
 may be had of God on earth, have so
 much sweetness in it; what will the
 vision of him in heaven? and what
 will the perfect knowledge of him
 there be? When the Apostle Paul de-
 sires the highest thing he could do for
 the Saints, it is this, that they might
 have

have a greater measure of the knowledge of God and Christ: let us consider the Text, for it is a great Text, Col. 2. 1, 2. For I would that ye knew what great conflicts I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. See with what a magnificent Preface the Apostle ushers in this desire. 1. He tells them he had a great conflict for them: the word in the original signifies an agony; the Apostle was in an agony of desire for these Saints. 2. He tells them he would have their hearts comforted; he longs after their comfort, the highest measure of consolation for them. And what is all this Preface for? only to usher in this, to tell them he would fain have them come to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ: that which pith him.

him into such an agony of desire was, that they might come to a fuller measure of the knowledge of God and Christ, and that because he knew this was the onely way for their comfort; That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the Father, and of Christ: he knew there was no better way for their comfort, then to come to clear knowledge of the Mystery of God and Christ. Observe how the Apostle expresseth this; he would have them come to the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the Father, and of Christ. There are several things of great moment to be considered in these words.

1. The Apostle teacheth us here, that the knowledge of God is a Mystery to the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God: There is a great Mystery in the knowledge of God, poor creatures that we are, we are

apt to think we know enough of God at first; but there is a *Mystery* in the knowledge of God; and what this *Mystery* is, the Apostle tells us, it is the *mystery of the Father, and of Christ*: And what is this *Mystery*? what is this *mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*? So far as we can conceive of it, it lyes in this, to know God in the *unity and simplicity* of the Divine Essence, to know God in the *Trinity of Persons*, to know Christ as *Mediator*, and to be able to apprehend the Father in Christ: it is the *mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*, to be able to apprehend the Father in Christ, as Christ says, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*; that is, to apprehend the Divinity to be so in Christ, as that we see, that by having the Son we have the Father, and in possessing Christ we possess whole God. This is the *Mystery of God* the Apostle here speaks of, and we have reason every day to be more and more diving into it, to labour to come to a clear knowledge of it. That is the last thing; there is a *Mystery* in the

Εὐλῳ-
σθε ἡμᾶς
τὴν σφά-
την γινώ-
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καὶ ὁ
καρμὴν τῆς
τιλῆς κα-
ταβαλὼν.
Phavo-
rinus.

the knowledge of God. 2. The Apostle would have them to come to the *acknowledgement* of this Myſtery; to the *acknowledgement* of the *mystery of God*; that is, he would have them to come to a clear and diſtinct knowledge of all the Principles concerning God and Chriſt: the word ſignifies an accurate, or more exact conſideration of a thing: after the firſt perception of it, we have ſome knowledge of God and Chriſt at firſt; but we muſt labour to come to a more accurate exact knowledge of God and Chriſt. 3. The Apoſtle would have them come to the *riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding*. 1. Here is *riches*, that ſets forth *copiouſneſs* and *abundance*: The Apoſtle would not have them have ſome ſlender taſtes of God and Chriſt onely, but he would have them enriched with the knowledge of God and Chriſt, *Pbil. 1. 9. This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge, and in all judgement.* 2. He would have them labour to attain unto the greateſt certainty and aſſurance in their knowledge: he would

would have them come to the riches of the full assurance of understanding. This full assurance of understanding, I take to be opposed to wavering and to doubting. The Apostle would have us to come to a certainty in our knowledge. A Christian should not be fluctuating and hesitating in his thoughts concerning God and Christ, but he should endeavour to come to this, that he may be able to say, Upon this bottom I can live and dye; that which I know concerning God and Christ is such a bottom, that I can venture my hope, my happiness, my all upon. This I take to be the meaning of that expression, the full assurance of understanding. Now these are the things above that we are to seek, and to set our affections upon, viz. God and Christ; our thoughts are to be conversant about these things; we ought to be taken up in the study of the mystery of God and Christ: and then do we seek the things that are above, when we converse much in our thoughts with God and Christ.

2. By the things above, we are to
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understand the glory and blessedness of heaven; by the things above (saith a Learned man) we are to understand the kingdom of heaven, the beatified vision of God; those joys which the saints shall one day partake of with Christ their head, and the holy angels: We ought to seek the things which are above, as much as if he should say, we ought to mind the glory and blessedness of the future state. This is also to be gathered from the context; If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God; as much as if the Apostle should say, When I speak of the things above, I intend nothing else but such things as are in Heaven; such things as Christ enjoys in the presence of the Father. Seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: It is as much as if the Apostle had said, consider what it is Christ now enjoys in the presence of the Father; consider what glory Christ is possessed of: Christ is above sorrow, above pain, above misery, above death: Christ enjoys perfect hap-

happiness in the presence of the Father; now consider what Christ enjoys, and these are the things which are above. This is manifest to be the Apostles scope, from the fourth verse, *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory*: It is as much as if it had been said, Christ is now in glory, and we shall one day be made like our Head, *we also shall appear with him in glory*. The Apostle would have us examine this, to think what that glory is, that Christ our head is possessed of, and what the glory is we shall be brought unto, in conformity to Christ our Head: the Head and Members must be like one another; if Christ be now in glory, the same glory is prepared for all that are Christs; and this appears from our Saviours last prayer, *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one*, John 17. 23. Therefore look what glory Christ as man and Head of the Church enjoys, we in our measure shall have a share in, if we be Christs, and Members of his Body. This

2 Cor. 4.

then we are to understand by the things above, *the glory and blessedness of the future state*. I have often thought there is nothing we are more wanting and defective in then this, viz. in studying and contemplating what *the glory and blessedness of the future state is*; we stick in present sensible things, and do not elevate our hearts to the future glory: but we ought to be of another frame; *Paul* tells us, *He looks to the things which are not seen*; that is, unto the things of the invisible world, to the glory of heaven, and the blessedness of the Saints there: elsewhere he saith, *He reckons that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. 8. 18. that was an argument he had his heart taken up with the glory of that state.

3. By the things above, we may understand, *the life and employment of the saints in heaven, and our communion with God in heaven*: we ought to seek the things above; that is, we ought to think much of our future life, and consider what our life and employment

ment in eternity is like to be : though this be of near affinity with the former, because our happiness in heaven, and the glory and blessedness of that estate consists in the life we shall live there ; yet we may consider this under a distinct head ; and the distinct consideration of this will help to illustrate the former particular: The Apostle tells us, when we are *absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 8. From this Scripture we may argue, If when we are *absent from the body, we are present with the Lord*, then there is a life in which the soul shall live with God, when it is in a separate state from the body, a life that we shall live in the Divine Presence. Now this is to *seek the things that are above*, to consider what the life is that we shall live in the presence of God and the holy Angels, when we have laid down this burden of flesh, and are discharged from the body of death, and shall be made free among the Heavenly Society, and admitted into the number of the Spirits of just men made perfect, to know what our life and

C 3 imploy-

employment shall be in that state, this is to *seek the things which are above*. Though we cannot comprehend fully and perfectly what this life will be, yet we may understand a little of it, as the Scripture doth reveal it: the Scripture teacheth us thus much, that hereafter we shall walk by sight, 2 Cor. 5. 7. Now we *walk by faith, not by sight*: That intimates, when the life of faith ends, then the life of sight and vision begins. Here indeed we live the life of faith, hereafter we shall live the life of sight and vision; Matth. 5. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*. The Scripture teacheth us, when we shall appear, we shall be like him, 1 Joh. 3. 2. So that our life in heaven is so far revealed in the Scriptures, that it is to *see God*, to be like him; that is, that we shall live a life like to his life, so far as the Creature is capable. These are the things above that we should seek. Phil. 3. 20. *Our conversation is in heaven*. Our converse is in heaven. If Paul's converse was in Heaven, then we must suppose he did contemplate in his

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minde what the life of Heaven was; and his aim was to walk as the Saints in Heaven did, to walk as one free of that corporation. *Our conversation is in heaven*: his endeavour was, that his behaviour, carriage, and deportment might be such, as if he were in Heaven among the Saints there: This is to *seek the things which are above*, to study what the life of Heaven will be, what our employment and converse there is like to be.

4. Lastly, By the things above, we are to understand such things as have a *tendencie* to the future life, and the future state. It is the observation of a Learned man, As by the things above we ought to understand *the glory and blessedness of heaven* primarily, so secondarily and consequentially, by the things above we are to understand those gifts of Grace, which are as the seeds of this desired Glory; as Faith, Love, Holiness, and the rest of the Graces of the Spirit, by which we are brought to eternal Glory. The Graces of the Spirit may well be called *the things that are above*, because (as *Augustine* expresses

it) in respect of their excellencie they do excel all *earthly* things. So then as we ought to seek *the things above* in this sense, that is, seek after the glory and blessedness of Heaven; so we ought to seek that Grace that hath a tendencie in it to bring us to this glory. *Phil. 3. 15. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded.* How would the Apostle have us minded? he would have us minded like himself: and what was Pauls frame? read the former verse; *I press toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;* that is, *I press towards the mark of perfection:* Why so? *for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* As if he had said, I would get as high in grace here, as is possible, that I might be fit for glory hereafter: I press toward perfection in Grace, as that which is the way to bring me to that Glory. *As many as be perfect be thus minded:* The meaning is, If you would approve your selves to be grown Christians, excellent Christians, Christians of the highest rank and form, aim at perfection; look

at the highest attainments in Grace here, that so you may be fitted for glory hereafter. So that to seek the things which are above, is to seek for a suitableness & a meetness for the future life and state. It is a great expression which we have, 2 Cor. 5. 3. *If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.* The Apostle is speaking of the glory of Heaven, and of the Saints entering in to that glory in their souls, when their body is dissolved. Now the Apostle's jealousy is this, *If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked*; that is, lest he should be destitute and void of those graces, ornaments, and spiritual affections, that might render him in some measure suitable to that state. The Apostle Peter exhorts the Saints to furnish themselves with variety of grace, all sorts of grace, 2 Pet. 1. 5. *Add to your faith vertue;* and so one grace to another: And what is the end? that they might be brought to a greater suitableness to the future life; so we have it at the eleventh verse: *For so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom* of

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As much as if he should say, If you add grace to grace, and grow to a greater excellencie in every grace; above shall be an abundant entrance administered to you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that, this is to seek the things which are above, when we minde and intend the acquiring and getting of grace above any earthly thing; when by the strength of Christ, and the grace of Christ in us, we are still polishing and refining our souls, growing up to more spirituality, and aspiring to get higher and higher in grace, that so we may be more and more fitted for the coming of the Bridegroom, and that we may be found ready, as it is said of the Bride the Lamb's Wife, she had made her self ready. So that when we are trimming, and refining, and polishing our graces in the strength of Christ, and endeavouring to attain to a greater suitableness to the heavenly life; then do we seek the things which are above.

2. I come now to the second Inquiry, to shew what it is to seek after, and to set our affections upon these things.

This we shall open in a few Propositions briefly.

L. To set our affections on things above, it is to think much of these things; If we would set our affections upon the things above, our thoughts must be much employed about these things: This word translated set your affections, elsewhere is translated to minde, Rom. 8. 5. Those that are after the flesh, do minde the things of the flesh. So here, we are exhorted to minde the things which are above: the meaning is, we should cause our mindes and thoughts to be occupied and taken up about these things.

1. We ought to think of the reality of invisible things; we ought to think that the things which are above are real things, substantial things: many do not think them to be so; a great many think, whatever is spoken of the other world, and of the blessedness of the Saints above, it is but a fiction and a fancie: this

is the temper of the Atheistical age in which we live; but we ought to think of these things as realities, as the greatest realities: *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. 11. 1. Faith ought to make that present and real to us, which is remote from sense.

2. We ought to think of these things, so as to study the nature and excellencie of these things.

3. We ought to think of them: that is, our thoughts ought to dwell upon them: we should not be content to have transient thoughts of these things, but we should dwell much in the Meditation of these things. This is one thing implied in that expression, *set your affections*; that is, *set your thoughts on things above*, let your minde dwell on these things.

II. To *set our affections on things above*, is to *value* and *esteem* these things above all other things. The Critics in the Greek tongue observe, that the word (*αγαπῶ*) signifies to *value* and *esteem* a thing, as (*καταγαπῶ*) signifies

Heavenly-mindedness

ifies to under-value and despise a thing; and this appears by the Text itself: *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.* The Antithesis and opposition that is between these two, shews what we are to understand by setting *our affections on things above.* Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; as much as if he should have said, Have the highest value for spiritual things; set the highest price upon spiritual things; esteem spiritual things above all earthly things. This value and estimation of spiritual things Paul had, when he said, *I count all things but loss and dung for the excellencie of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* Spiritual things budge & bear the greatest weight in our thoughts; we ought to approve them as the best things, and see a far greater excellencie in them, then in all temporal things. There is a Learned man that observes upon this Text, this word translated to *set our affections*, comprehends two acts in it: 1. It notes the act of the minde or understanding, when it thinks of any thing.

Phil. 3.8.

Davenant.

things: It notes the act of the will or affections, approving or loving a thing: so that to set our affections on things above, is to approve of them in our estimation as the best things, *Phil. 1. 10. That you may approve the things which are excellent.*

III. To seek the things which are above, it is to intend these things as our principal aim and scope, *Matth. 6. 33. Seek first the kingdom of God:* that is, let your principal aim and scope be to get an interest in the kingdom of God: So here, *Seek the things which are above;* that is, let your principal aim and scope be to acquire and get these things: let the main bent and tendencie of your souls lye towards these things. Every rational Agent that acts out of reason, and understanding, intends some end; now that which the Apostle would press us to, is this, to intend and designe spiritual and eternal things as our great end. There is no man but he hath some last end that he prosecutes: now that which the Apostle would press us to, is, to make eternal things
(the

the things of the other world) our great and last end; as much as if we should say, Whereas others are pursuing after other things, Riches, Honour, Pleasures, and making them their uttermost end; do you intend another end; do you make God and Christ, and the things of other world, your principal aim and scope. *Seek the things that are above:* Two are implied in it.

1. Make this your end, to make sure your interest in these things.
2. Get a holy meekness and preparedness of Spirit to enjoy these things.

1. Make this your end, to make sure your interest in these things.
Pet. 2. 10. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Phil. 3. 14. I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Paul pressed toward the mark of eternal Glory; Paul's great ambition was to win the prize of eternal Glory.

2. As we should make sure our interest in these things, so we should make this our end, to get a holy meekness.

ness and preparedness of spirit to enjoy these things. Seek the things which are above; that is, labour as much as may be to get up into the Spirit of heaven here on earth; labour to get a suitableness to the future life: Others converse with present sensible things, but do you converse with the things of the other world: See how you may get up into a spirit and temper; that is, fit for the life which is above, Phil. 3. 20. Our conversation is in heaven; that is, we labour to converse as men in heaven, and to get our spirits suited and adapted to that life.

IV. To seek the things which are above, it is to see that our affections be mainly carried out after these things: so see that our desire, love and delight do run out after these things, and lye in these things: where the treasure is, there the heart will be: If we judge and esteem these things as the best things, if we intend them as our principal aim and scope, then these things ought to draw our affections after them: our desire, love and delight should be carried out after these things.

to in God and Christ should have more of
 our hearts then the creatures have; we
 should solace and delight our selves
 in the thoughts of the future life, and
 be more pleased in the thoughts of
 what we shall enjoy hereafter in
 the future state, then in any thing we
 enjoy at present here on earth. To
 set our affections on things above, is to
 have our affections so fixed on these
 things, as that nothing here on earth
 should be able to loosen, unhinge, un-
 settle, or take off our affection from
 these things. To set our affections
 on things which are above, it is to
 cleave to God as our chief good, to
 embrace God as our onely portion,
 with the full bent of our affections.
 They are rare strains of affection
 which *Anstin* hath: O God (saith he)
 the knower of all secrets, thou knowest
 that thou art not onely dearer to me
 then the earth, and all things that are
 in it; but thou art more acceptable to me
 then heaven it self, and all things
 that are in it. God is the sum of all
 good things to us, God is our chief good.
 O how happy were it for us, if we
 could get such strains of love to God,

*Scis oculorum cog-
 nitor Deus,
 quod non
 solum terra
 & omnibus
 que in ea
 sunt mabe
 cariores,
 sed etiam
 celo & om-
 nibus que
 in eo sunt
 mihi ac-
 ceptabili-
 or es.*

D

and

and appeal to God as he did, and say :
*O God, the knower of all secrets, thou
 knowest that thou art not onely dearer to
 me then the earth, and all things that
 are in it ; but thou art more acceptable
 to me then heaven it self, and all things
 that are in it. This is to seek the
 things which are above, when our souls
 cleave more to God then to any
 created thing.*

V. Lastly, To seek the things which
 are above, it is to use our uttermost
 care, study, diligence and endeavour to
 get an interest in these things, and to
 be fitted for the injoyment of these
 things. It is observed by a Learned
 man, This expreffion of seeking notes
 labour and industry, and it is opposed
 to an idle velleity ; we may not con-
 tent our selves with general desires
 and faint wishes after the things
 which are above, but we must strive to
 enter in at the straight gate, as our Sa-
 viour's expreffion is : to seek after
 a thing, is to be carried out with stu-
 dy, care, and endeavour for the having
 and enjoying of that thing which we
 so seek after : Heb. 12. 15. *Looking di-
 ligently, lest any man fail of the grace*
 of

Querenda vocabulum indicat laborem & conatum, atq; exclusam velleitatem.
 Davénant.

Querere, est cum studio ferri & tendere ad res habendas vel fruendas.

of God: The word in the original is an emphatical word, *innoxiosos*, using diligent care and inspection over your selves, lest any fail of the grace of God: If we would therefore seek the things which are above, we ought to use the uttermost care and diligence for the acquiring of these things.

Thus we have the Doctrine opened: We come now to the Application.

The great Use which shall be made. Use.
of this Doctrine, shall be by way of Exhortation, to exhort us all to put in practice this great duty of Heavenly-mindedness: let us labour to get our hearts out of this world, above this earth, and to get up our hearts into Heaven, where our true happiness and felicity lyes. It was a familiar expression used by the ancient Church, *Let us lift up our hearts*: let our hearts be above: our hearts should be above; they should be above this lower world, they should be conversant in the upper world, where God and Christ, the Saints and Angels are, and where our true rest, happiness and felicity is to be expected. In the

*Sursum
corda.*

prosecution of this Use, there are three things to be done.

1. Give a few Motives briefly to quicken, and to press us to the great duty of *Heavenly-mindedness*.

2. Lay down some Directions for the putting in practice this duty.

3. Shew what the great Impediments of *Heavenly-mindedness* are.

For Motives to quicken us to *Heavenly-mindedness*, consider,

Motive 1. I. Our Regeneration, and the life which we live as Christians, calls us to *Heavenly-mindedness*: If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. A Christian is one risen from the dead, he is risen from the death of sin, to the life of grace. Now a man that is risen from the dead, does not live like other men; we ought to live as those who are risen from the dead: what an unsuitable thing were it, to see a man risen from the dead, to be much concerned about the affairs of this world? he is called to another state, to another life: a Christian is a man risen from the dead, and therefore he ought not to converse as other men do: our vocation

and calling, as we are Christians, calls us off from sin, from the world, from sublunary vanities, and calls us up to God, to seek for our happiness and satisfaction in God. 1 Cor. 1. 9. *God is faithful, by whom ye are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord :* A Christian is called unto fellowship with God and Christ, to have his happiness in God and Christ. *This is life eternal, to know thee the onely true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent :* A Christians happiness is to know God, and enjoy God in Christ; and therefore his heart should be where his happiness lyes. Before conversion, the soul seeks for happiness in the creature, and in sensible things; the work of conversion brings the soul off from the creature unto God in Christ. Now then, God and Christ being in Heaven, our hearts should be where the centre lyes: the end of our vocation or effectual calling, was to bring us unto God in Christ, as the point and centre of our rest; we do not understand the end of our calling, unless we know this, that our calling was intended

tended to bring us to God in Christ,
& to take up our rest in God by Christ:
it is the end of our vocation, that we
should *seek the things which are above.*

Motive 2.

*Calum no-
bis Patria.*

II. To press us to *Heavenly-mindedness*, consider, our country is above: mens hearts do naturally lye in their own Country; now all the Saints of God may say, *heaven is our country.* It is said of the ancient Saints expressly, *They seek an heavenly country.* Heb. 11. That is a mans Country, which is the place where he was born, the place where he lives, and where his inheritance lyes: the Saints are born from above; it is our Saviour's expression, unless *a man be born from above*: the Saints are born from above; their original is from the Spirit of God, who comes from above: and their inheritance is above, and they must live for ever above, and therefore their hearts ought to be above; whence their original was, where their inheritance lyes, and where they must live for ever.

John 3.

Motive 3.

III. Christ our Head is in Heaven, and that is Motive sufficient to press us to *Heavenly-mindedness.* Paul thought

thought it so here in the Text, *Seek those things which are above*: Why so? *where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*. As much as if he had said, Christ our Head is in Heaven, he is possessed of happiness, and our hearts should be where our Head is: look what happiness Christ as Man and Head of the Church enjoys, the same blessedness is destined and appointed for us in our measure: what happiness Christ as man is brought unto, is but an instance what all the Saints in their measure shall be brought to. Doth Christ as he is man live in the sight of God? we also at last shall be brought to that sight: Is Christ, as he is man, above misery, above pain, above death? Is Christs humane body clothed with glory and immortality? unto the same condition shall we be brought at last: So the Apostle tells us in *Phil. 3. 21. Who shall change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his glorious body*. Now we ought to think what happiness Christ our Head enjoys, and to consider that the same happiness in a degree and proportion is prepared for

us: Christ is entered into Heaven
 Heb. 6. 20. as our fore-runner, and all the members shall follow the Head: If Christ be in Heaven possessed of glory for us and have given us an earnest in what he possesseth, what we shall be brought unto; it is an unworthy thing for us to minde this earth, and forget what our Head is possessed of for us and will bring us unto.

Motive 4. IV. Consider, our true happiness lyes above, and it is a vain thing to expect it in this life: This the Apostle intimates in this place, *You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* As much as if he should say, You will never be happy, you will never come to true happiness, till you come to be where Christ is, till you come to enjoy what Christ enjoys: *your life is hid with Christ in God*; that is, your happiness is to live as Christ lives, to enjoy what Christ enjoys; and till you come to possess what Christ possesseth, you are never happy. Now then, if our happiness consists in what Christ enjoys, then it becomes us to study and meditate much what the happiness and glory

glory of Christ is, and what our happiness will be in conformity to what our Head enjoys; we shall never be happy till we are arrived to that happiness Christ is possessed of. *Aquinas* in his Book *Contra Gentes*, lays down this as one position, That mans *last happiness* cannot be in *this life*; and there are many arguments he gives to prove it, among which these are some.

1. One reason why our last happiness cannot be in this life, is, because we cannot see God as he is; we cannot see God in his Essence (as his expression is) here on earth: *No man can see my face and live*, saith God to *Moses*: Our mortality will not bear the light of God face to face. Now without the clear sight and vision of God, there cannot be perfect happiness; for *this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* *Per essenti-*
am.

2. Another Argument that happiness cannot be attained in this life, is, True happiness can never be attained, unless the natural desire and appetite which is in man, be satisfied: then

then is a man happy, when he enjoys all the good he would have: if there be any good wanting to a man he would have, such a man cannot be happy, because his desire and mind is not quiet: Happiness consists in this, when the mind hath all it would have: Now there is no man knows or enjoys so much here on earth, but he still desires to know and enjoy more: now until the natural appetite, which is in man, be filled up, there cannot be perfect happiness.

A third Argument is this: Mans natural desire is carryed out after stability in happiness; as every man desires happiness, so he desires a *stable* happiness: if a man have that which he accounts happiness, unless it be stable and constant to him, such a man hath not attained to true happiness; for it is of the nature of happiness to be unchangeable: that which is possible to be lost or interrupted, is not worth the name of happiness. Now there are many accidents that may occur, that may interrupt the best happiness we can have here on earth;
and

and whilst there is a possibility that a mans happiness may be interrupted, the minde cannot be quieted, as to the enjoyment of what it apprehends as its chief good. Now if a mans last happiness cannot possibly be attained in this life, it concerns us to have our thoughts elevated to the other world, and to minde that state where true happiness is indeed to be found.

V. Lastly, to perswade us to seek *Motive 5.*
the things which are above, consider, the things which are above, are the most durable and permanent things. What folly is it to set our hearts upon things which will not last always? riches, pleasures, earthly delights, life it self, will not last always; but the things of the other world last always: God and Christ are always the same; the life which we shall live above, is a perpetual constant life; we shall ever *2 Thess. 4.*
be with the Lord. Certainly this is *17.*
 true wisdom, to fix our hearts upon eternal things, to keep our hearts upon those things which will always abide by us. The things of this world are transient things, and pass away:
 we

we may have them so long, and no longer; there is an end of them over a few days: but *the things which are above* are permanent, stable, always the same. A man shall never be deceived in his hope of happiness, if he fix his heart upon eternal things; and the reason is, because these things do always remain, and the object of his happiness is still the same: therefore it is a good speech of *Autin*, *Joyn thy heart to eternity, and thou thyself shalt be eternal*: The way to have an unchangeable happiness, is to love unchangeable things; it is not possible a mans happiness should last any longer then the things he placeth his happiness in: if he love changeable things, then a man will have but a changeable happiness; if he love unchangeable things, then he will enjoy an unchangeable happiness: if we love the unchangeable God, we shall then never be to seek of happiness, our happiness shall still be the same. These be the Motives.

II. We come now to the Directions, to shew how we ought to put in practice the great duty of *Heavenly-mindedness*.

i. If

*Judge cor-
tium eter-
nitati, &
eternus
eris.*

1. If we would put in practice this great Duty of *Heavenly-mindedness*, let us *contemplate* and *meditate* much of the future life; we should transfer and carry our selves in our thoughts out of this world, and by holy contemplation set our selves down (as it were) in the other world: it were good for us, if now and then we could leave this earth behinde us, and climb up to heaven in our thoughts, and consider a little, so far as we may, what the state and condition of the other world is; we should study what God is, and what Christ is; we should contemplate how it is that God communicates himself to the souls of his people in the other world; we should contemplate what the actings of the soul upon God the chief good are, and what the delights and satisfactions of the soul are like to be: this is to meditate on the future life: the more we contemplate the future life, and make the things of the other world present and familiar to us, the greater alienation of spirit shall we finde from this world, and the more will our mindes and hearts be carryed forth to the future state.

2. Let

*Ad exem-
plar illius
vitæ cele-
stis. Zanch.*

2. Let us labour as much as may be to get up into the *spirit* and *life* of Heaven: labour for an *Heaven-like frame*; that is, such a frame as is most suitable to the life and spirit of the Saints in Heaven. It is the observation of a Learned Divine, when the Apostle exhorts the Saints to *seek the things which are above*, his intention is, we should be daily conforming our life to *the example and pattern of that heavenly life*: we ought to study what the life of Heaven is, what the frame and disposition of the Saints in Heaven are, and to get a frame and spirit as suitable to their frame and spirit as is possible. It is a great expression of the Apostle, *Paul* in 2 Cor. 5. 9. *We labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.* He had said in the verse before, *We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* *Paul* was confident, that when his body was dissolved, he should immediately be with God in his spirit, that his soul should be taken into glory: this was his confidence; *Now*, saith he, *we labour, that whether*

whether present or absent we may be accepted of him; as much as if it had been said, Although we cannot be so happy as yet, to get into Heaven, although we cannot be present there in person, yet we would fain have an Heaven-like frame, we would have such a frame of heart here, on earth, as should bear proportion to that frame and temper we hope to be of in Heaven: *We labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him; we would be such to the Lord in the frame and disposition of our spirit, whilst we are on earth, as we hope to be to him hereafter; whether present or absent, we would be acceptable to him.* But here the great Inquiry will be,

Quest. How may we get more up into the spirit and life of Heaven? since a great part of our seeking the things above, consists in a conformity to the Heavenly life; how may we do to get more up into the spirit and frame of the Saints in Heaven? This is a noble Inquiry, and deserves to be the matter of our study and contemplation all our days. What is the

the great concernment of a *Christian*, but (after he hath gotten into Christ, and hath gotten some assurance he is in the state of Salvation) to be working up his heart into the spirit of the future life? A *Christian* hath two great Works to intend in this world: first, to make sure his title to Salvation, to pray for a more clear and distinct understanding of his union with Christ, that he may see he hath a sound title to eternal life and glory. Secondly, to pray for Grace, that God would work up his heart into the Spirit of the future life, that so he may be adapted and suited to that life, and brought to as great a conformity to it, as may be here on earth. Now what Directions may be given us as to this, to bring us more up to the spirit and life of heaven here on earth, before we come to be taken thither in person? This being the main thing intended in the whole Discourse, I shall take liberty to be a little large here, and there are many particulars that must be spoken unto.

Ans. 1. If we would get up into the

the life and spirit of Heaven, let us begin by degrees to withdraw our hearts and affections from present sensible things. What is the life of Heaven but this? *God shall be all in all*: hereafter we shall live upon God purely, and immediately, without all creatures; therefore by degrees we should labour to have our hearts more taken out of the creature, and gathered into God. Mistake me not, whilst we are here on earth, we must use the creatures, and it is the will of God we should use them; and not to use them to those ends God hath appointed them, were to tempt God, and make our selves wiser then God: But here lyes the skill of a Christian, while we do use the creature, converse with sensible things, still to labour to see God in every creature, and to pass from every creature to God: not to stick in the creature, but to pass from the creature to God, and then, to think of such a time when we shall live upon God without these things. It is a good speech of

Non te prohibet Deus amare ista sed diligere ad beatitudinem.

Austin: God doth not forbid thee to love these things (speaking of created things)

E

things) but he forbids thee to love them
as thy happiness. We ought to keep
our hearts free and reserved for God
in the use and presence of all creature
injoyments : we ought to love no
thing as our happiness but God : I
should be all one with us as to this,
whether we have the creature, or have
not the creature ; whether we are full
or empty ; whether we want or are
bound : we should still be at the same
point of rest in God, as in the centre
we should cleave to him as our chief
good, and embrace him as our only
portion : If God gives us creature
comforts and enjoyments, we should
labour to see God in them, and find
out God in them : and when we taste
any sweetness, any delight in the crea-
ture ; when we finde any suitableness
or conveniencie in the creature, we
should say, Here is God : This sweet-
ness, this suitableness, this conveniencie
is but a drop of the Ocean ; all this is
to elevate me to the Fountain : There
is nothing more in any creature-com-
fort or enjoyment, then what God
hath put into it ; therefore must my
soul say, I look at God in all these
things.

things: I stick not in the creature, but I look at God; the creatures are made to show me God. This should be our frame in the presence and enjoyment of the creatures; and then we should think much of that time, when God will communicate himself to us immediately. There is a time when I shall drink no more from the Cistern, but shall take in all from the well-head: There is a time when I shall have no more need or use of these things, which are now as so many organs or pipes to convey comfort to me by: God shall be all himself, and shall supply all by himself: God shall be instead of Sun and Moon to me, instead of meat and drink to me, instead of all relations; God himself shall be all things: We should think much of that time and state, when God shall be thus to us. This is one way to get up into the spirit of the future life, by degrees to begin to withdraw our hearts and affections from present sensible things.

2. If we would get up into the life and spirit of Heaven, let us mind *spiritual happiness, seek after a spi-*

ritual happiness, and be taken up in the thoughts and desire of a spiritual happiness: The happiness of Heaven is mainly and principally a spiritual and an intellectual happiness: the happiness of God himself is a spiritual, an intellectual happiness: The Being of God is a spiritual being, and the happiness of God is a spiritual happiness suitable to his Being: God hath no other happiness, then to know himself, and understand himself. The happiness of the Saints and Angels is a spiritual intellectual happiness. The Angels and Souls of glorified Saints are spiritual substances, and therefore their happiness must needs be a spiritual happiness: The Angels and glorified Saints have no gross material objects to live upon, they have no other happiness then what they take in by their understandings and wills. O consider it, true happiness consists mainly and principally in what the soul enjoys: not but that the body shall at last participate of happiness with the soul: when the body shall be raised, the body shall participate in its kinde with the

the happiness of the soul : but the Essence of true happiness lyes mainly and principally in what the soul enjoys ; and that appears from those words of our Saviour : *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* John 17. It is the soul that is capable of knowing and enjoying God ; and therefore true happiness and eternal life consists properly in what the soul enjoys. *Sensual minded* men are apt to think there is no happiness but what the body enjoys, and is taken in by the senses ; but true happiness is an inward thing, and it consists in what the minde enjoys : There is more true happiness which the minde takes in, in one single thought of God ; then the body and outward senses can take in by all the variety of objects that are most pleasing to them : look as the understanding or minde in man is a higher principle then sense is in a brute ; and as the objects of the minde are higher and more excellent then those of sense ; by so much the more is the minde or understanding capable of taking in a greater happiness then sense can do. Sense in a brute

is capable onely of taking in present mutable things; the understanding is capable of converling with eternal and immutable things: therefore that which quiets the minde most, which is of the greatest capacity, that must needs be the greatest happiness. The minde of man covets eternal things, and is satisfied with nothing but eternal things; therefore to know that a man is in the love and favour of God, whose love or hatred is eternal; to know that a man shall be freed from everlasting misery and condemnation; to know that a man shall be happy in living with God for ever: these are eternal things, and such things as will quiet the minde of man. Divines observe, that eternal life in the beginning of it, consists in *Justification* and *Sanctification*: and this is truly asserted; for what is happiness, but the inward quiet of the minde? Now when the soul is in a justified state, when it apprehends itself reconciled to God, this brings in inward quiet, the peace of God that passeth all understanding. So in *Sanctification*, when the work

of

of *Sanctification* is begun, we are in some measure brought to a conformity and likeness unto God, and there is an harmony and an agreement between our wills and the Divine Will. Now from this conformity unto God, and the agreement and harmony that is between our wills and the Divine Will, there ariseth peace: This is certain, so much holiness, so much peace: we should therefore look after a spiritual happiness, an happiness consisting in peace of conscience, in the apprehension of the favour of God, an happiness consisting in holiness: so much true peace of conscience, so much holiness, so much true happiness: This is the beginning of eternal life: *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost.* The happiness of Heaven consists in this, that we shall be filled with Grace, and the Spirit of God: In Heaven the Spirit of God shall act us perfectly and universally; therefore the more Grace, and the more of the workings of the Spirit of God we feel in our selves here on earth,

the more we have of the beginning of heaven; of the beginning of eternal life. The happiness of heaven is a spiritual happiness, because it consists in the spiritual actings and operations of the soul upon God: when the soul is full of Grace, and of the Spirit of God, then it knows God perfectly (so far as the creature is capable) it loves him and delights in him perfectly, and then it is most happy: I say, when Grace is perfected and consummated, and the operations of the soul are carried highest in the exercise of Grace, then is happiness most compleated. This should cause us to covet Grace and the Spirit of God in the highest manner; we should covet Grace and the Spirit of God more than any temporal thing: Certainly so much of Grace, and of the Spirit of God as we feel working in ourselves, so much may we perceive of the dawnings of heaven and eternal life in our souls: He that feels much of the presence of the Spirit of God in his soul, and feels the lively sensible actings of Grace in his soul, may know he hath the beginning of heaven

in himself. Let us covet a spiritual happiness, a happiness consisting in the exercise of Grace, and in the spiritual actings of the soul upon God: we should often think with our selves, What is it that must satisfy the soul to eternity? suppose I had the greatest enjoyment of sensible things, would these things satisfy me? what is it that my soul can rest in ultimately? what is it the minde can be quieted with? If I know I am beloved of God, if I know I shall one day certainly enjoy God, and live with him for ever; here is some stay and quiet for the minde; this will quiet the minde more then all sensible things can do. Happiness consists in the highest operations of the minde; therefore when the minde is most carried out after eternal things, which are most suitable to the minde, then it enjoys most happiness: A great part of the happiness of heaven consists in this, that the Saints know, what happiness they do now enjoy, they shall always enjoy: If it were possible that such a thought could be let into their mindes, that
what

what they now enjoy, they should not always enjoy; this would render their happiness imperfect: true happiness consists in the highest operations of the mind, when the mind is most carried out after eternal things; let us imitate this happiness and be taken up in the thoughts of this happiness.

3. If we would come more up in to the spirit and life of heaven, let us think much of the beatifical vision, and breathe much after it. The great happiness of heaven is this; that we shall see God, *Matth. 5. 8.* Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. *Saith Austin, There shalt thou see the face of thy God.* What greater happiness to the creature, then to see the face of the Creator, to see him who made heaven and earth? to behold the Glory and Majesty of the first and most excellent Being? God being simply and absolutely perfect, in his perfection comprehends all the perfections of things. In the sight of God we behold all perfection at once. If all the beauties in the world were contracted into one beauty, what a

*Ibi videbis
faciem Dei
tui.*

*Deus cum
sit simpli-
citer perfe-
ctus, sua
perfectione
omnes rerum
perfectiones
comprehen-
dit. Aquina.*

What sight would that be? in the sight of God we see all beauty, all perfection at once: In the sight of God we see the Centre from whence all the lines are drawn; whatever is sweet, amiable, pleasant, delectable in the creature, it all issued from this Fountain: how sweet, how pleasant, how delectable then must the Fountain itself be? God is the rule and measure of all good, God is the good of every good: nothing is good but as it participates of God, and as it hath some similitude and resemblance of the Divine goodness; how sweet then will it be, to see the first original independent good, who is a sea and an abyss of good, who hath all good in himself without stint and limit? Those several delights we have from the variety of creatures, God hath all in himself, and much more abundantly; all the creatures are too narrow and too short to exhibit and represent to us the immensity and infiniteness of the Divine perfection: God is not onely all that perfection that is in the creature, but he is infinitely more; and the reason is, because

*Deus est
omnis boni
bonum.*

cause, if all the perfections of a creature were summed up into one, it is but *finite perfection*: it is a contradiction, to suppose an infinite creature; but God's perfection is infinite perfection; what happiness then must it be, to be admitted to see him, who hath all this perfection in him! This should make us, 1. To think much of the beatifical vision; our thoughts should be much upon it. 2. We should have great and admiring thoughts of it. O let us not think it is a light thing to be admitted into the Divine presence; the more you think of it, the more will you find your hearts swallowed up in the thoughts of it: I say, let us not think that it is a light thing to be admitted into the Divine presence, and to stand before him, who made heaven and earth: We ought to think this is the highest dignity and honour that can be cast upon us: if the Queen of Sheba was so much taken with the admiration of Solomon's wisdom, as that she said, *Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and*

that bear thy wisdom, well may we say
to our Maker, Happy Lord are they
that may be admitted into thy pre-
sence, and may stand continually be-
fore thee, to behold the glory and
beauty of thy Majesty: let us have
great and admiring thoughts of the
beatifical vision: Do not think it a
light thing to be admitted to the
sight of God. 3. We should pray
*much that we may be accounted wor-
thy to be admitted to this sight*: It is
that which deserves to be made the
great request of our souls all our days,
that we may be accounted worthy to
be admitted into the Divine pre-
sence, and live in the sight and pre-
sence of God to eternity. And as e-
ver we hope to come to the sight of
God, to the beatifical vision, be sure
to remember this, that *Christ must be
our way*: *I am the way, the truth,
and the life; no man cometh to the Fa-
ther but by me, Joh. 14.6.* It is Christ
that must bring us to the Father whilst
we are here on earth, and it is he
that must make way for our admis-
sion to the sight of God in heaven:
It is Christ as Mediator must bring us
to

to this sight, and let us into
 sight; his humanity opens the way
 to the Divinity. Christ as man, by
 virtue of the *Hypothetical* or *personal*
 union, hath a right to the sight of God
 and Divines commonly say, That
 Christ as man, from the moment
 his conception, had the sight of God.
 Our nature was alienated from God
 and deprived of communion with
 God by our sin in *Adam*: But as
 Son of God, the second person
 of the Trinity, by assuming our nature
 and taking of it into Unity of person
 with himself, hath brought our na-
 ture near to God; and our nature,
 as it stands in Union with Christ the
 Head of the Church, hath recovered its
 right to communion with God; and
 Christ by the merit of his obedience
 hath purchased a right for us to the
 sight of God: so that when we have
 thoughts of the *beatifical vision*, and
 have breathings in our souls after it,
 we must keep our eye upon Christ,
 and remember it is by him we must
 be admitted into the presence of God:
 never think of seeing God without
 Christ; never think of being admitted
 into

into the *Divine* presence, without Christ's being your way and door.

✦ If we would get up into the spirit and life of heaven, *We must labour to adhere to God, and to cleave to him as the chief good.* In heaven, as there will be the clear sight of God, so there will be the most perfect adherence of the soul to him: The glorified soul must needs see God to be its life, its strength, its happiness, and all good to it, and therefore it must needs cleave perfectly to him. Now if we would come up into the spirit of heaven, we should labour to have our souls cleaving to God here on earth: we should rest in God as in our Centre: we should labour to cleave to God more than to any created thing: in a strict and proper sense, our selves should cleave to nothing but God; though we may and ought to love the creature in its place, yet we may not love it as we love God: Our souls must cleave and adhere to nothing as our chief good, as the matter and object of our happiness, but God: of God only it is that we must say, He is my life, my strength,

Isa. 12.

strength, my salvation, my happiness: this was the Church's Song, *The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my salvation*: We ought to cleave intimately and inseparably unto God. God ought to be the stay and rest of our souls: so much as our souls come to stay and rest themselves upon God as our chief good and onely happiness, so near do we come to the life of Heaven. It is a proper and an apposite expression to help us to understand this, that which we have in *Isa. 26. 3. Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose minde is stayed on thee.* This expression shews us what the carriage of the soul ought to be towards God the *chief good*; the soul ought to cleave to God most intimately, and to stay it self upon him. The Saints in heaven do thus stay themselves upon God; God is the great *basis* they lean upon: they have no sensible comforts to live upon, as we have, but they see all in God, and therefore he is their stay: it is upon him they lean for happiness: the more we can adhere to God, and cleave to him, and stay our souls upon him

him as our chief good, the more do we come up to the life & spirit of heaven.

5. If we would get up into the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us labour to take complacencie in the glory and blessedness of God*: Here ly's the quintessence and perfection of the heavenly life, so far as we are able to conceive of it here on earth. The glorified Saints look off themselves, and out of themselves, and take complacencie in the glory and happiness of God, who is the first and most perfect Being: It is matter of delight and joy to them, to see God so holy and so happy as he is. The Schoolmen rightly observe, that to love God for himself, it is to *will that God should be God*: Then do we love God for himself, when we take complacencie in the glory and blessedness of God; when we are well pleased to see God to be what he is; that is, to see him to be the most excellent and most perfect being. Our happiness (as it is in us) it is but a finite thing, the happiness of finite creatures: but God's happiness is the happiness of the first infinite and eternal Being. Now it becomes

Velle Deum esse Deum.

us to be more pleased to see God happy, then that we are so; and to see him great and glorious, then that we are so. Here lyes the perfection of a created will, to take complacencie in the Divine perfection, as being the highest and uttermost object that it can acquiesce in. The highest strains of grace lye in these two things: 1. To desire the glory of God above all things: 2. To take complacencie in the glory of God above all things. The more we can attain to these here on earth, the nearer do we come to the life and spirit of heaven.

6. If we would come more up into the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us labour to have the most immediate dependance upon God, and to expect all from God.* The Saints in heaven have the most immediate dependance upon God for every thing; they see all comes from God, and they depend upon him for all. The Saints in heaven do not receive their happiness, comfort, and satisfaction from the organs and pipes of the creature, as we do; but they receive all from God immediately: and as they receive all from God immediately, so they

they know they receive all from God immediately; and they depend upon God for all, and expect all from God: therefore the more immediate our dependance is upon God, and the more we expect all from God, the nearer do we come to their life. *Psal. 62. 5. My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.* The time is coming, when we must depend upon God for all: when we come to dye, none can help us but God; friends cannot help us, no creature can help us, and life it self will fail us, all our expectation then must be from God; if he fails us, all fails us: when this life fails and ceaseth, we must depend on God to give us eternal life; no creature can give us eternal life; no friends, no not the nearest Relations can help us when we come to extremity, God then must be our only friend: it is good therefore to have all our dependance upon him, and expectation from him now: If we expect no good, no happiness, no comfort but what comes through the conduit-pipes of the creature, when

they fail, all our happiness must fail; therefore it is good to expect that God should give us ~~that~~ which no creature can; that God should communicate himself to us, when all creatures fail: When we have all creatures round about, they can afford us little help or relief in a time of extremity; therefore it is good to have our expectation raised above all creatures, and to expect all from God immediately: And this is to be brought nearest to the life of the Saints above. Onely let us take this Caution: When we say that we should depend on God immediately, and expect all from God immediately, the meaning is not, as if we might not make use of the creatures as helps appointed by God in their proper places: we may and ought to use the creatures, in that way, and for those ends unto which God hath appointed them; but take heed you expect not too much from the creature: our expectation ought to be raised above the creature; we ought to consider, no creature can do us good, but as God puts virtue into it, makes use of it

it for our good, and as God acts it and communicates himself by it; our great dependance therefore ought to be upon God himself above all creatures.

7. If we would come more up into the life and spirit of the Saints in heaven, *we should labour to take up our rest and satisfaction in God.* The Saints in heaven are perfectly satisfied with God, and in God, *Psal. 17. 15. When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness:* that is, when I awake in the morning of the resurrection, I shall be satisfied with the vision of thy face. The sight of God is the most satisfying sight, and that will appear from these three considerations. 1. Because the Saints in seeing God, see all things in God; there is nothing in the effect, but what is in the cause; the Saints by seeing God, must necessarily see the perfection of all things in him. 2. The Saints in seeing God, are arrived to the uttermost perfection, beyond which there is no perfection. That which causeth uneasiness in the minde of man here in this world,

it is, because when he hath found one good, still he thinks yet there is a higher good; and when he hath found that, still he thinks there is a higher to be enjoyed: but when the soul once comes to the highest good, which is truly so, and knows there is no higher, then it rests and quiets it self here. Now the Saints that are come to the sight of God, know there is no higher good then God, therefore their mindes are satisfied in God. 3. The Saints in beholding God, behold infinite perfection; they see that in God, that will fill their capacity brim-full; now then the Saints having their uttermost capacity filled, this is that which must needs breed perfect satisfaction. So then, if the Saints in heaven are perfectly satisfied in God, and desire nothing more then what they have in God, we should labour to come up to this spirit, to be satisfied in God, and with God: We should rest in God as in our Centre, *Psal. 116. Return O my soul unto thy rest.* Though we desire many things for our necessity, as food, raiment, outward convenience,

veniencie, and the like; yet we should covet nothing as our rest but God: Here is my rest, whether I have much or little, want or abound, God is my rest; we should labour to say so inwardly, sensibly and experimentally, that God is my rest, I need nothing as my happiness but God.

8. If we would get more up into the spirit and life of heaven, *Let us look down upon all the things of this world as poor and mean things.* The Saints in heaven, who live with God, and have the sight of him, see that in him, and have that before their eyes, which makes all the things of this world seem poor and mean to them. Most true is that saying; *He that hath seen a little of the Creators light, every thing that is created seems little to such a one.* When the Sun appears, the Stars vanish and disappear; a greater glory buries and swallows up a less: We should labour to have such great thoughts of God, as that the creatures may seem but little to us. That which causeth admiration, is some surpassing excellencie in the

Qui parum de luce Creatoris asperxit, brevis ei est omne quod creatum est.

object: when we finde something to parallel, or to go beyond that which we did admire, we shall cease to admire that which at some times we did admire. Now we shall never finde any thing here below that will parallel that glory that is above: we ought therefore to have our hearts fixed in the admiration of eternal things, and look down with a holy contempt upon temporal things: This made Paul say, *We look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen: the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal.*

2 Cor. 4.
18.

9. If we would come up more into the spirit and life of heaven, *Let us labour for the most perfect acquiescence in the Divine Will.* The Saints in heaven do think that is always best which God doth; their wills fall in with Gods Will, and they have a perfect acquiescence in the *Divine Will.* The Saints in heaven do know that what God wills is always best; therefore there is not any hard thought, any contradicting thought, the least reluctancie in them
against

against the *Divine Will*; but their will doth presently fall in with the *Divine Will*. Hence is that of our Sayiour, *Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven*. In heaven there is a perfect compli-
 ance with and satisfaction in the *Divine Will*, now we should labour after this frame here on earth, that our wills might perfectly fall in with the *Divine Will*. It was an expreffion I once heard from a holy man: *I have obtained that grace from God, to acquiesce in the Will of God, when once it is manifested*. This is the very spirit of heaven, to acquiesce and take complacencie in the Will of God, when once it is manifested: there is not any the least murmuring thought in the hearts of any of the Saints or Angels in heaven against that which God doth, but they think all is well done that God doth, and their wills rest in his. This is a great piece of heaven, when we make the Will of God the ground of our acquiescence and satisfaction: God hath willed it, and therefore we acquiesce. It is one thing to be satisfied with a mans condition from some moral considerations, and another thing

thing to make the Will of God the ground of our satisfaction and acquiescence : the ground of our satisfaction ought to be, God hath willed such a thing, therefore I acquiesce : the perfection of a created will, is to follow the Divine and increated Will.

10. If we would get up into the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us labour to be more deeply sensible of the infinite distance that is between God and us.* In heaven, the Saints and Angels are most sensible of the distance between God and them : the more perfect our knowledge of God is, the more clearly shall we discern the distance that is between God and us : the more clearly we understand the Divine perfection, the more clearly shall we see our infinite distance from God. This is certain, The clearer our knowledge of God is, the greater foundation there is for humility : Never so humble a creature as the *humane soul* of Jesus Christ : and the reason is, because Christ as man had the most perfect knowledge of God, and Christ knowing God most perfectly, he understood the distance that

that was between his Humanity and the Divinity : therefore this is certain, The clearer our knowledge is of God , the more humble shall we be. When the Lord sate upon the Throne, the Seraphims covered their faces, *Isai. 6. 1, 2.* and what did that speak, but the deep sense that they had of the infinite distance that was between God and them? The most perfect creature in its kinde, a glorified creature, is but a creature : now between the creature and the Creator , there is an infinite distance : the more we are reduced and sunk down into nothingness in our selves, in the apprehension of the infinite distance that is between God and us , the nearer do we come to the spirit of heaven. In heaven we shall most perfectly understand our dependance upon God, that the creature is a meet dependent thing ; and if God abstract and withdraw from the creature what he hath given to the creature, the creature vanishes into nothing : the creature is nothing, hath nothing, but what it hath received ; if God abstract what he hath given

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ven, the creature returns to nothing. O labour to keep up a deep sense of the infinite distance that is between God and us.

11. If we would come more up into the spirit of heaven, *Let us labour to hate sin, not only because of the effects and consequents of it (as that it is damning, and the like) but because it is an uncomely thing in its self, and because it is contrary to the purity and perfection of God, who is the first and most perfect being, and the rule and measure of all good.* This is certainly the spirit of heaven; the Saints in heaven having the sight of God, must needs see and know how contrary sin is to God; they see clearly that sin is contrary to the being of God, to the purity of God, to the life of God, to the will of God, and to the glory of God: and therefore they must needs hate it as such. The Saints also in heaven see how contrary sin is to their own beings, and to that rectitude that is put upon them, they being made of God to be such creatures as they are; the principles of their own being, as they are made

made and framed of God to be *new creatures*, being set in a direct contrariety unto sin, and therefore they hate it upon that account, so that the bent and poize of their wills is set against sin, as it is sin, as it is contrary to the Divine Being, Purity, Life and Glory; and as it is contrary to that rectitude which God by the work of the new creature hath put upon them. Now we should labour and pray that we may come up as much as may be into this spirit; we should labour to hate sin as it is an uncomely thing in it self, as it is most contrary to God, contrary to the Divine purity and perfection, and contrary to the Divine stamp, make, and frame of the new creature in us; and the more we can hate sin upon this account, and under this notion, the nearer do we come to the life and spirit of heaven.

12. If we would come up more to the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us value and prize the knowledge of God and Christ above all earthly things.* You know what our Saviour saith, *This is life eternal to know thee: Eter-*

John 17:

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nal life; the happiness of heaven, consists in this, to know God; the perfection and consummation of eternal life consists in this, to know God in a way of vision: and the beginning of eternal life, it is to know God in a way of faith; that is, to know God as he hath revealed himself to us here in the way of his Word. It hath been shewed before, how we ought to breath after the beatifical vision: that which now we are speaking of, is to shew that we ought to covet after the knowledge of God in a way of Faith; we should covet after the knowledge of God, which is to be had from the Word, and is possible to be attained unto here on earth. Here we *walk by faith, not by sight*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. although we cannot know God in a way of vision, as we shall know him hereafter, yet we may know him in a way of Faith: Now we should covet to know God in a way of Faith, as he hath revealed himself in his Word; we ought to prize and covet after the knowledge of every truth of God, but especially we ought to

to covet after the knowledge of God himself, who is *prima Veritas*, the first original Truth. The Scripture doth every where commend to us the knowledge of God : Col. 1. 10. *Increasing in the knowledge of God.* 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall we know the Lord, if we follow on to know the Lord,* Hosea 6. 3. *Let* Jer. 9. 23,
not the wise man glory in his wisdom, 24
nor the strong man glory in his strength ; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he knoweth me, saith the Lord. I have often thought that it is the great sin of Professors, that they do no more press after the knowledge of God and Christ here on earth, and that they are no more taken with the discoveries of God and Christ that are made to them : we hear often of the great things of God and of Christ ; but alas, these things are little valued and esteemed by us : but it ought not to be thus with us. Certainly, if our ultimate and last happiness be to know God in the way of the *beatifical vision*, the next happiness to this, it is to know God

as he may be known here on earth : and this will be found in experience to be true, that there is more true sweetness to be taken in from the knowledge of God that is attainable here on earth, then there is from the enjoyment of any temporal thing : And therefore holy souls are wont to bless God more, for revealing himself and his Son to them, then for the greatest temporal thing he ever gave them. God is the highest and most Supream Object that the minde of man can converse with : and the more the minde of man is taken up in the contemplation of this Supream Object, the greater amplitude, liberty and enlargement will it finde in it self. Inferiour things do but limit, narrow, and confine the soul : for this is certain, that the soul it takes in liberty, amplitude, enlargement, greatness ; I say, the soul takes in amplitude or confinement according to the nature of the objects it doth converse withal : Lower and inferiour objects do but narrow and confine the soul, because they are beneath the capacity of the soul : but

if the soul did rise up to the knowledge and contemplation of God, who is the first eternal Truth, then it would finde liberty, amplitude and enlargement; then it would see it had a broad and spacious field to walk in. Certainly, if the greatest happiness of heaven be to know God, so far as we are capable to know him, our greatest happiness here on earth is to attain as great a measure of the knowledge of God as it is possible.

13. If we would come up into the spirit and life of heaven, *Let us keep the eye of the minde, as much as may be, fixt upon God.* It is said of the holy Angels, that they *always behold the face of their Father which is in heaven.* The Saints and Angels are never weary of beholding the face of God. The Saints in heaven, as they do see God, so they do always see him, and they are never weary of seeing of him: when we have beheld God never so long, we may still see that in God which may draw forth our admiration. It is a true observation, *Nothing which is beheld*

Nihil quod cum admiratione consideratur potest esse fastidiosum.
with Aquin.

with admiration can be nauseous and wearisome to us: and the reason is, because, as long as we are under the admiration of a thing, so long our desire remains to that thing. Now the Saints in heaven do always behold God with admiration, and therefore they are never weary of the sight of him. God is an infinite object, and therefore cannot be comprehended by a finite understanding; therefore the Saints in heaven when they behold God, being never able to come to the bottom of his perfections, are still detained in the admiration of him; as they always see him, so they always desire to see him. The Saints in heaven are never weary of their happiness; as they see God, so they always desire to see him. Now in imitation of the Saints above, we should keep the eye of our mindes, as much as may be, fixt upon God: When the eye of the soul is off from God, it is off from its centre; and when things are off from their centre, they are never quiet and at rest: if we consider it well, we shall finde that the cause of all our trouble and disquietment

quietment is, when our hearts are unhinged, and when they are taken off from God: when the eye of the minde is turned upon God, then the soul is in its proper place, and there it findes rest: we should therefore keep our minde as much as may be at a point of rest in God: if we keep the eye of the soul fixt and intent upon God, we shall always finde that in God which will give rest and contentment to the soul. It is said of *Moses*, That he saw him who was invisible, *Heb. 11. 27.* *Moses* kept the eye of his minde fixt and intent upon God. And *David* saith, *Mine eyes are ever towards thee, Psal. 25. 15.* So much as the *Divine excellencie* draws the eye of the soul towards it with admiration, so much do we come up to the spirit of heaven: an heavenly-minded soul thinks it much to have its eye taken off from God; not but that there will be many things that will interpose to divert us while we are in our present state: but then we ought to remember, so far as we are grown up to *Heavenly-mindedness*, we shall never think it well with us, till

we are returned and brought back again to the admiration of God. The sense that is of God's excellencie in holy souls, makes them thus to pray: O, that our souls may be eternally ravished with thine eternal excellencies.

14. If we would get up into the spirit of heaven, *Let us desire nothing so much as God.* Isai. 26. 9. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.* This is the language of the Church: the Church needed many things, and she desired many things; she needed liberty and deliverance, and she desired liberty and deliverance, (for this Song, as is conceived by judicious Divines, is penned with relation to the Church in *Babylon*) yea, but when the Church was in the greatest trouble and distress, she desired nothing so much as God himself: *With my soul have I desired thee in the night:* as much as if the Church should say, Though I need many things, yet it is thee that I desire, *thyself*, Lord, *thy self*, rather than liberty and temporal deliverance,

Psal.

Psal. 73. 27. *Whom have I in heaven
 but thee? and there is none upon earth
 that I desire besides thee.* It is the
 property of the Saints to desire no-
 thing so much as God. *Whom have I
 in heaven but thee?* The Saints look
 at nothing greater or more excel-
 lent in heaven it self then God: All
 the glory, blessedness, joy and delight
 that is in heaven, is nothing in com-
 parison of God himself; nay, all the
 joy, happiness, and felicity that they
 have in heaven, it is from what God is
 to them: This is certainly the spirit of
 heaven; as the Saiuts in heaven have
 all their happiness in God, so they
 desire to have it no where else but in
 God. *It is truly so, saith Austin,*
that God himself would not satisfie me,
unless he promised me himself: What-
soever God promiseth thee, is worth
nothing besides God himself: It is *ipsum fon-*
the Fountain of Life that I thirst *tem vite*
after. I take it, that a great part of *sitio esurio.*
 the holiness of heaven lyes in this,
 that the Saints in heaven would not
 have their happiness in any thing
 but God; they are so pleased with
 God, as that they would not ex-
 change

change their happiness in him for any thing else: so sweet shall the face of God be to them, so beautiful, that his face being once seen, nothing-else can delight them: If we would come up into the spirit and life of heaven, we should labour to be of this frame and temper, not to be willing to exchange our happiness in God for any thing else that can be presented to us. Now this ought to be understood aright, when it is said that the Saints should desire nothing so much as God, the meaning is not but we may desire other things in their place, and in subordination to God the chief good: but when God and the creatures come in competition, when God and the creatures are compared together, then should we say, Thy self, Lord, and no created thing, thy self, Lord, without all things, rather than all things without thy self. It is a speech of Bernard; *God is pleasing by himself*; and we should say, his gifts are not so pleasing, but that himself is more pleasing: We should not desire so much any thing that God can give us, as himself: God himself should

*ipse per se
placeat.*

should be more pleasing to us than all his gifts.

15. If we would come up into the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us labour for affections and dispositions most like to God*: The happiness of heaven is described by this; That *we shall be like him*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We shall be like him*; that is, *we shall be like him* in holiness, like him in happiness; we shall be holy as he is holy, happy as he is happy, according to the capacity of creatures: It is the greatest happiness of the creature, to be assimilated to the Creator: It is the greatest happiness of the creature, to have his life brought as much as may be to an agreement and similitude to the Divine Life. The Saints in heaven have the same judgement and estimation of things that God hath; they will what God wills, they love what he loves, they delight in what God delights, they aim at the same ends that God aims at. The Divine understanding is the measure of Truth, and the Divine will is the measure of Good: what God judges to be best, the Saints in heaven judge

to be so; what God wills to be best, the Saints will it as such. God values holiness and spiritual excellencies above external things, *Psal. 147. 10. He delights not in the strength of the horse, he takes not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.* God values^e grace and spiritual excellencies above all external things, and therefore the Saints in heaven do so. God knows that he doth most for a man, bestows most favour upon him, when he gives him most grace, and not when he gives him any temporal thing; and therefore holy souls think so too. God wills holiness, loves holiness, and delights in holiness; and therefore the Saints in heaven must needs will it, love it, and delight in it. The Life of God is to know himself, to behold his own excellencies, and to refer all things to himself; and the life of the Saints in heaven is to contemplate God, and to refer themselves wholly to God: we should labour and pray to be brought to as great a conformity to God here

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on earth, as it is possible. *Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy: be ye perfect as your heavenly father is perfect.* We would labour to have the same thoughts and apprehensions of things as God hath: we should have the same value and estimation of holiness as God hath: we should labour to have the same hatred of sin as God, the same love and delight as God hath. God loves himself, and delights in himself above all things; and we should love God, and delight in God above all things. God wills his own glory infinitely, and we should will it to the uttermost of our possibility. This is to come up to the life and spirit of heaven, when we labour for affections and dispositions most like to God, when we are brought up to as near a similitude to the Divine life, as it is possible.

16. If we would come up to the spirit and life of heaven, *Let us value all our comforts by what we see of God in them:* the state of heaven is described by this; *That God shall be all in all.* What is that? among other things, this is certainly one thing comprehended

prehended in that expression : the Saints in heaven see God in all things, and all things in God ; and every thing is amiable to them, as they see God in it, and no farther. It is a memorable passage of a Modern Divine ; *We shall, saith he, in heaven see God, and imbrace him in our selves, out of our selves, and in all things, so that though we shall see all the holy Prophets, Patriarchs, Martyrs, also our own kindred and acquaintance, yet all our affections shall rest in one God by Christ.* Nothing is sweet to the Saints in heaven, but as they see God in it ; and nothing should be sweet to us, but as we see God in it : we should labour to see God in every thing, finde out God in every thing, and pass from every thing to God : The best injoyments, the best comforts, the best conditions in this world are pitifal things, poor, dry, sapless things, any further then we see God in them. God is the good of every good ; and if God be the good of every good, then nothing is truly good but as we see God in it. Abstract and take God out of any creature,

ture, any condition, any injoyment; that creature, that condition, that injoyment, is but a dry husk, a shell without substance. Our great misery and infelicity in this world, is, that we stick in the creature, and forget God; we do not rise up in our thoughts to God: all particular and inferiour goods, are subordinate to the univerval and supream good; and they were given us on purpose to lead us by the hand to the chief good: and when we stick and rest in any lower and inferiour good, we forget the true end for which these things were given us by him, and that was to bring us to the chief good. They are memorable passages which *Austin* hath: *Unhappy man is he, which knows all these things, (meaning created things) and knows not thee; but blessed is he that knows thee, although he knows not those things: and he that knows thee and them too, is not the happier because of them, but it is by thee onely that he is happy.* And it is a memorable comparison which that holy man useth: *If (saith he) the bridegroom should make a ring for his spouse,*

spouse, and she when she had received that ring, should love the ring more then her husband who had made her that ring; would there not an adulterous minde appear in her, towards the gift of her husband, although she loved nothing but what her husband had given her? For this certainly did the bridegroom bestow that pledge of his love upon her, that he himself might be beloved in his own love-token: Therefore hath God given thee all those things, that thou mightest love him, who gave thee those things: It is more that he would give thee, to wit, himself, who gave thee those things. This is *Austin's* comparison. O let us not stick in the gifts of God, but let us labour to see God in his gifts, and pass from the gifts to the Giver.

17. If we would come up into the life and spirit of heaven, Let us be much in acts of praise and adoration. That which we call praise, is nothing else but the declaring and setting forth of anothers excellencie; and adoration is the giving of honour, reverence, and respect to another, suitable to the excellencie that is in him:

Praise

Praise may be given to the creature, but Adoration is to be given to God onely: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve.* Adoration is due to God onely; and the reason is, because in God onely is the Supreme Excellencie: and the most Supreme Honour is due to the Supreme Excellencie. Now the life of heaven is the life of praise and adoration: the Seraphims say, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, Isai. 6.* and the heavenly host, *Luk. 2.* cry, *Glory to God in the highest.* Praise and adoration is the proper work of heaven. In heaven there will be no room for prayer, because in heaven there will be no wants, no imperfection, and there is no good the Saints can desire, but they will be sure to have; but praise will still remain. The Divine Excellencie is still the same; and whilst the excellencie of God remains to be the same, there will be still matter for praise and adoration: It will be matter of wonder to Saints and Angels, to behold the glory of the Divine Majesty. Saints and Angels will wonder at the infinite

finite perfection of the Divine being: they will not wonder at the being of God simply considered; that is, they will not wonder that there should be such a one as God; for then they will know and understand most clearly, that the being of God is most necessary; that God always was, is, and shall be; and that he could not but be: but that which they will wonder at is this, they will wonder at the greatness of Gods Majestie, when they see the divine excellencie to be so much above their comprehension; they will wonder to see so glorious a being as God; and they will wonder at the divine goodnes, that he should make such creatures as they are, to behold his perfections. We should therefore inure our selves to acts of praise and adoration here on earth: let us be much in admiring and adoring the divine perfection; this will bring us neerest the life of heaven.

Lastly, If we would come up to the life and spirit of heaven, *Let us labour for the most perfect love one to another.* The Saints in heaven, as they have the most perfect love to God,

God, so they have the most perfect love each to other: the Saints in heaven do not grudge one at another; they do not envie each others happiness: the Saints in heaven take complacencie in the good and happiness of each other, as well as in their own good and happiness. It was an Expression I once heard from an holy man; *I am* (saith he) *come to that piece of heaven, that I do not envie any one that is above me.* Certainly it is a great piece of heaven, that we shall not envie the gifts and graces of others: nay, if we are come into the spirit of heaven, we shall heartily rejoyce in the gifts and graces of others. A spirit of envie is most contrary to the spirit of heaven: for, in heaven we shall rejoyce in what God hath done for others, as well as in what he hath done for our selves: and the reason is, because in heaven we shall not look so much at our own private happiness, but we shall look at the glory of God. Now because God is glorified in doing good to others, as well as to our selves; therefore we shall rejoyce that God is glorified in
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what he hath done for others, as well as in what he hath done for us.

Thus have I shewed, according to the measure that I have attained, how we may get a little up into the life and spirit of heaven. I am very sensible how far short the best of the Saints come, as to the full attaining unto these things: yet these are the things we should be aspiring and reaching after; and so far as we can in any measure and degree attain to these things, so far shall we feel the buddings, and perceive the dawnings of eternal life in our own souls: and how sweet is it to have experience of such a life began in our souls here on earth, as shall never expire or have an end? This natural life which now we live, is but a poor dying thing at best; O but this spiritual life which hath been discoursed of, if so be we can but feel the beginning of it in our souls, O then we have that life set up in us that shall never end. So far as we finde these holy dispositions growing up in us, we shall evidently perceive the dawnings of eternal life in

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our own souls : wherefore let us make it our study and business all our days, to be growing up more into the spirit of heaven : the more we study these things, and meditate on them, the more reason shall we see, why we should prize such a life, and labour to get up into it.

It remains onely now, that I should shew you what the principal *Impediments* of *Heavenly-mindedness* are, and so I shall put an end to this Doctrine. There are several *Impediments* of *Heavenly-mindedness*.

1. The first grand impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness* is *Unbelief*. *Faith* is the substance of things not seen, the evidence of things hoped for, Heb. 11. 1. It is the property of faith, to make *absent* things present ; to give things that are absent to sense, a subsistence by faith in the soul. Now if a man want that faith that should realize future things, and give them a subsistence in his minde ; it is no wonder that his heart is not carried forth in desire after them. The affections follow the apprehensions of the mind:

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if a man do not apprehend future things to be real or certain, it is no wonder if he do not affect them. Now the greatest part of men look upon nothing as real or certain, but what is obvious and present to sense: they doubt and suspect the truth of all that which is spoken concerning a future life, and a future state: a man will never part with or forgo a *certain* good for an *uncertain*: Riches, honours, pleasures, the comforts of this life, men look upon as present and certain; but the joys of heaven, the blessedness that is above, the pleasures that are at Gods right hand, they look upon as things at a distance, and uncertain; and therefore they will not quit their interest in present things, for the hope of future things. This *evil heart of unbelief* in men, is that which causeth them to depart from the living God: and this unbelief is too prevalent in the hearts of the godly themselves. The holiest men, and those that have most grace, are most sensible of the buddings and puttings forth of unbelief within them: although they do not question the

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the truth of the future life, and of the future state, as other men do; yet they complain that they do too often finde secret doubts arising in their hearts about these things: and although there be a seed of faith, yet it is not so actuated as it ought to be: for if we had such a firm and deep belief about future things as we ought, it is not possible that we should be so much captivated by present things as we are. Certainly, the deep, rooted, stedfast belief of eternal things, would produce other effects, and another kinde of change then what is found in the most of our hearts. It were not possible we should live as we do, had we a clear prospect by faith of eternal things. Therefore as ever we desire to be *heavenly-minded*, we must pray that this *evil root of unbelief* might be eradicated and taken out of us: and we should pray,

1. That God would clear up the eye of our faith, that we may more clearly discern and apprehend the things contained in the promises.
2. We should pray that we may give a more

firm assent to the truth of the promises concerning future things, and may not stagger at the promises through unbelief. 3. We should pray that we may live much in the hope and expectation of the accomplishment of the things contained in the promises. It is a proper Scripture to illustrate this, *Rom. 8. 25. We are saved by hope.* The meaning of that Scripture I take to be, The grace of hope doth *gradually* bring us into the possession of Salvation: Therefore doth the Apostle say, *If we hope for that we see not, then we do with patience wait for it:* It is as much as if it had been said, By a patient expectation of the things God hath promised to us, we are gradually brought into the possession of the things we hope for: If our hope do not slack or fail, but we are still kept up in the expectation of what God hath promised, our hope shall at last be turned into fruition and possession.

2. A second impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness*, is *want of more experience in divine and heavenly consolations.* He that hath tasted of the sweet-

sweetness of Gods presence here on earth, cannot but be meditating and longing after the full enjoyment of that presence hereafter. It is reported of *Austin* in his life, That his desire was not so much of any thing here on earth, not of gold, or silver, or precious stones; not of honours, or dignities, or of the pleasures of the flesh; nay, not so much of those things as were necessary to the present life: but all his desire it was of the Lord himself, whose name was a refreshment to him, and the memory of whom was his consolation: They are expressions that he himself useth: *Lord* (saith he) *since I have learned thee, thou abidest in my memory, there do I finde thee; when I remember thee, I am delighted in thee; these are the delights which thou hast given me.* The sweetness which the Saints finde in God, keeps their hearts fixt and intent in the thoughts of him; and the more they taste of the sweetness of his presence here on earth, the more sweet is it to them to think what God will be to them hereafter. *How great is thy goodness*

which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee? Psal. 31. 19. The Saints taste a little here, but they know there is much more laid up then ever yet they took in, or can take in here on earth: It is but a sip, a taste they have here, but the full draughts are reserved till hereafter. Now want of more experience of the sweetness of God's love and presence here on earth, is one cause why we are no more taken up in the meditation of what we shall enjoy hereafter: we think there are no higher delights then what are to be enjoyed in sensible things; but we ought to remember, that his loving kindness is better then life, and one day in his house is better then a thousand. It is an expression that Austin hath, So great is the blessedness that is to be found in Gods presence, that if we could abide no longer in it then one days space, innumerable days in this life, filled up with the confluence of all earthly goods, were to be despised in comparison of it: for, saith he, this was not spoken out of mistaken affection, when that holy man said, One day in thy house is better then

then a thousand. Now we taste but little of this presence here on earth, and therefore we desire and long no more, and are looking no more into what we shall enjoy hereafter. The Apostle prays for the *Philippians*, that they might abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgement, *Phil. 1.9.* In all judgement, or in all sense, or in all experience, we ought to abound in spiritual sense and experience, as well as in knowledge: we content our selves with a notional knowledge of God and of Christ, but we should pray for spiritual sense and experience, as well as knowledge. *O taste and see that the Lord is gracious:* the more experimental sense we have of the sweetness of God and Christ in our own souls here on earth, the more ardent will our desires be after the full enjoyment of him in heaven; and the more shall our hearts be fixt and set upon the contemplation of what we shall there enjoy.

3. Another great impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness* is sensuality, and too much addictedness to present things:

It is the property of *sensuality* to be conversant about *present things*. The Schools observe, the motions of *sensuality* do tend to such things onely as are delectable to the outward senses; *sensuality* mindes nothing but the delights of the body. Now this principle of *sensuality* pulls us down so much to these inferiour things which are present, and occur to sense, that we cannot rise up in our thoughts to things that are absent, and out of sight: *Sensuality* is like a plummet of lead that hangs upon the soul, and presseth it down, and hindereth it from rising up unto its proper object: it hinders the soul from ascending unto the contemplation of God and eternal things. *If the minde have that from whence it may be delighted from without, it will remain without delight from within.* *Sensuality* is a strong and forcible principle; it carries us with a great force and violence, and with a great impetuoufness, to those things that delight the senses; and so strong is the power of *sensuality*, that it oftentimes captivates the will and understanding, and

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and draws those superiour faculties of the soul after it: so strongly is sense bent and set upon its object, that it violently hurries the understanding and will, and causes the minde to think of nothing else, and the will to pursue nothing else, but what sense is inclined unto. When the soul is in this hurry, it cannot be free for the contemplation of heavenly things: holy contemplation requires a free, sedate, serene, and well-composed soul. When the soul is bent downward to temporal and earthly things, it cannot rise up to the contemplation of eternal things.

4. Another impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness* is *unmortified lust*. When the Apostle had exhorted us here in the Text, *To seek the things which are above*, he bids us in the next place, to *mortifie our members which are upon the earth*: Intimating this, that without the mortification of our lusts, we shall never be fit to practice the great duty of *Heavenly-mindedness*. *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth*. Why members on the earth? because corrupt lusts, they

they do always tend to *earthly* things, and they do detain and keep the minde to *earthly* things onely. Now these *fleshy lusts*, they are said to war against the soul, 1 Pet. 2. 11. One unmortified lust draws the strength of the soul after it, and therefore they are said to war against the soul. *Fleshy* lusts hinder the soul in the pursuit of its great interest: the great interest of the soul is to enjoy God, and maintain communion with God: Now unmortified lust carries the strength of the soul another way, and so it hinders the soul in its ascent to the chief good.

5. Another impediment of Heavenly-mindedness is multiplicity of worldly business, and immoderate cares about the things of this life, Luk. 21. 34. Take heed lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Here are two impediments of Heavenly-mindedness, spoken of by our Saviour: The first is sensuality, comprehended in those words: Take heed lest your hearts be
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overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness. A man that is given up to those lusts, surfeiting and drunkenness, is a *sensual-minded* man, he is drowned in *sensuality*. The other impediment is *the cares of this life*. When a man is oppressed with worldly care, this hinders him in his preparation for death and judgement. A man that is involved in multiplicity of worldly business, and oppressed with earthly cares, hath no time or leisure to think of his soul, to meditate on eternity, and to contemplate the things of the other world: His head and heart is so full of other things, that he hath no time or leisure to minde eternal things: It is the wisdom of a man that would keep his spirit free for God, not to thrust himself into more worldly incumbrances then needs he must. It is true, if God call a man to more then ordinary work or business, if his call be clear, he may expect so much the more grace and assistance; for God is not wont to be wanting to us, when he gives us a call: but when a man out of a covetous humour grasps

grasps at more then he is able to manage without prejudice to his spiritual state and calling as a Christian; this oftentimes proves a great snare, and a great impediment to *Heavenly-mindedness*. It is true, there is a double extreme, Too much business, or too little; it is the will of God we should walk in a particular Calling, and be diligent in it: Christianity is no patron to idleness. But then as the neglect of a lawful Calling is one extreme, so too much worldly business, too much incumbrance about earthly things more then we are called to, is another extreme, and oftentimes proves a great impediment to *Heavenly-mindedness*. How is it possible a man should be free for God, and heavenly things, that is wholly drunk up and immers'd in the cares of the world?

6. Another impediment of *heavenly-mindedness*, is *inordinate affection to lawful things*. When a man loves lawful things *inordinately*, and *too much*, this is a great impediment to *heavenly-mindedness*. If any thing have more of the heart then God and Christ

Christ, that must needs hinder the ascent of the soul to its proper object. *Where a mans treasure is, there will his heart be*: if a mans treasure be above, if he account it his great happiness to live with God, and to enjoy him for ever; such a man will keep his heart free for God. A man who is *heavenly-minded*, whose treasure and happiness is in heaven, is most careful to keep his heart free for God: he is most curious and jealous over his affections, fearing lest any thing should have that room and place in his affection, that should be reserved for God and Christ. When we let out our affection inordinately, beyond due bounds and measure; when we *over-love* the creature, and *over-delight* in the creature; this is a great impediment to *heavenly-mindedness*. Nothing can be that to us, which God and Christ is; nothing ought to be that to us, which God and Christ is. Holy and experienced souls are wont to say as *Austin* doth, *There is no reward more sweet to be had from God, then God himself: whatever God gives thee beside himself, is less then himself.* Now when

when we set up the creature in the place of God, and give that to the creature which is due to God onely, this must needs be a great impediment to *heavenly-mindedness*. A man that would be *heavenly-minded* whilst he is using lawful things, ought to think with himself, These things are good for present use, these things are suitable to my present state, these things are good so far as I see God in them; but these things are not my happiness; my happiness is a superiour happiness; my happiness is to live with God and Christ in the other world; therefore though I use these things, I ought not to think them to be my chief good, nor to take up my rest in them.

7. Another impediment of *heavenly-mindedness*, is *too much addictedness to the love of this life*. We are exceeding loth to think of going hence; we would fain live a little longer here on earth; that we might solace our selves in outward comforts and enjoyments. This addictedness to the present life, is a great impediment to *heavenly-mindedness*. He that would
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be heavenly-minded, ought to sit loose from this world, and the present life; he should be able to think with contentment of going hence, and entering into the future state: the thoughts of the *divine presence* into which we are to enter, should *wean* us from this world, and the love of this present life. We should labour to have such great thoughts of the *Divine presence* into which we are to enter, that it should not be grievous to us to part with this world, and all creatures, and to part with this life to go into that presence: 2 Cor. 5. 8. *Absent from the body, and present with the Lord.* No sooner do we leave the body, but presently and immediately (if we be the Lords) we enter into the *Divine presence*. Now the thoughts of that presence should so over-power our souls, that we should be willing to quit our station here, to enter into that presence. It is a speech which one of the Ancients hath: *There are some, saith he, that are fed only with the love of eternity.* O these are blessed souls indeed! but how few such souls as these are there to be found.

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We are so much wedded to the present life, so much addicted to present things, that we cannot rise up to the contemplation of eternal things: we cannot be willing to forgo this life, and present things, to go to God, and live with him in his eternity. This fondness of the present life, is a great impediment to *Heavenly-mindedness*.

8. Another impediment of *heavenly-mindedness*, is *presumption of long life*. The generality of men are apt to think it is soon enough to think of eternity and the future life when they are grown old, or brought into some great sickness, so that they have no hope of a longer life: and we are apt to think of a long life here on earth: we are too apt to presume there are some more years we may live, and this inclines us to think how we may make the best of this world while we live in it; and so we put off the thoughts of the future state. But we ought to be of another frame and temper; we ought to pray as Moses did, *Teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.* And what is it so to

to number our days, as to apply our hearts to wisdom? but this; So to consider that our present life is short and uncertain here on earth, as to think of another life and state that is more lasting and permanent, and to prepare for it. Death may surprise us before we are aware; and to be sure, we cannot live long, much less always here on earth: this therefore is true wisdom, to consider how we are like to spend the days of eternity, and what the life is we are like to live in the other world. A wise man will consider the end of things; he will consider how things are like to be with him at last. True wisdom respects the longest state and duration of things. To presume of a long life here on earth, which if it were the longest, is not so much as a moment to eternity, and to forget the future state, which is everlasting, this is the greatest folly.

9. Another impediment of heavenly-mindedness, is a false opinion of the world, and of earthly things. Men think there is more good, more happiness, more satisfaction in the world,

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then

then indeed there is to be found in it. No man will minde and look after an absent and an unseen happiness, when there is an happiness, as he imagines, that is present, and lies before him. The world lies before men as a fair and a pleasant field, and there are variety of flowers appear in it, this and the other pleasure, this and the other contentment, that presents it self: Surely, think men, if I am in such a condition, I shall finde something there; if I have this enjoyment, I shall finde happiness there: but the world is not that which men take it for: when they have tried the variety of pleasures and conditions they expected happiness in, they do not finde that happiness and satisfaction in them they expected. All earthly pleasures have an emptiness in them, and leave the soul under a greater thirst after the enjoyment of them then it was in before. It was the speech of a Philosopher that *Plutarch* mentions: *What gluttonous person is there*

Βίσιον. that saith, Now I have eaten, and it is enough? and what amorous person saith,

Πισίαν. Now I have loved, and it is enough?

Carnal

Carnal pleasures are so far from quenching the thirst of the soul, that they do increase it; and though it commonly falls out that sensual men are soon surfeited and cloyed with one pleasure, yet not finding that which they expect in one pleasure, that doth beget in them a thirst after some new pleasures. These golden dreams of finding happiness in earthly delights, makes men forget the true pleasures, the pleasures that are at Gods right hand. This *imaginary* happiness which men please themselves with, in earthly things, takes them off from minding that which is solid, substantial happiness indeed.

10. Another impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness*, is want of a due consideration of the glory and eternity of the future state. The reason why men desire no more, and long no more, after future things, it is because they do not duely consider the glory and eternity of future things. The Scripture tells us, *Eye hath not seen; nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the*
I 2 things

things which God hath prepared for them that love him. In his presence there is fulness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore: and they shall drink abundantly of the river of his pleasure. The glory which thou hast given to me, I have given to them. All these things, and much more, doth the Scripture speak concerning the future state. Now want of a due consideration of these things, is the cause that men are no more heavenly-minded. Things that are not known, are not desired, are not loved, are not longed after: Had we a due consideration of the glory and eternity of the future state, we should be more affected with it. If we consider the glory of the future state, either as to the *privative*, or *positive* part of it, we shall finde it a glorious and blessed state indeed. 1. If we consider it as to the *privative* part, to live in a state without sin, without sorrow, without grief or perturbation: to live in such a state, where there shall be no more wants, no more infirmities, no more imperfections: to live in such a state, where

where we shall be under no more temptations, where we shall be free from death, yea, from the fear or possibility of death or misery: to live in such a state, where there shall be no more eclipses of the Light of Gods countenance, where we shall be no more in danger of losing the sight and sense of Gods love: This is a glorious state, if you consider it as to the privative part of it. But then, 2. If we consider the positive part of this state, to live in such a state, when we shall see God always; when we shall always love him, always delight in him; to live in such a state, where there shall be a full and perfect communication of God to the soul, where there shall be perfect rest, perfect satisfaction; this is a blessed state indeed: and then to think that there shall be no cessation, no not the least interruption of this peace, this joy, this solace, this satisfaction; this must needs be a blessed and glorious state indeed. Now want of the due consideration of these things, is the cause why we are no more heavenly-minded. Fools and slow of heart

that we are, we think there is no happiness, no joy, no comfort, no life to be had, but what is in this world, and to be found within the confines of time: whereas, if we could get our hearts a little out of this world, and get them up into the other world; we should see, there is the true life, there is the true happiness, there is the true consolation to be found, there and there onely are these things to be found. What are all the pleasures, and delights, and enjoyments of this world, in comparison of what the glorified Saints enjoy in the presence of God, in the sight of him, and in the communication of him to their souls? want of a deep, solemn consideration of what is to be had and enjoyed in the future life and state, is a great cause why we have our hearts no more taken up with this life and state.

11. Lastly, the last impediment of *Heavenly-mindedness*, that we shall mention, is *want of a due consideration what is our ultimate and last end*. We were not born to live always here on earth, neither to enjoy our last hap-

happinefs here on earth; but we were created to a blessed immortality, to live in the prefence of God and the holy Angels, and to converse with God to all eternity. Now want of a due confideration of this, is that which makes us fo little heavenly-minded. Every wife man will minde his laft end; the acquiring and attaining of his laft end, is his uttermoft perfection. If man were not capable of an higher happinefs, nor deftinated to a higher happinefs then what the brutes and fenfitive creatures are capable of, and are deftinated unto, then it were his intereft to minde fenfible things only: but mans laft end is higher then fo, mans laft end is to attain the uttermoft perfection his being is capable of. Now man is indowed with an intellectual and an immortal principle which God hath put within him; therefore mans laft and ultimate end is to have a happinefs fuitable to this intellectual and immortal principle which God hath put within him. Now want of a due confideration what that is by which our

beings are perfected, and in which we enjoy our last happiness and perfection, is one cause that we are no more heavenly-minded. O, do we think that there is no other happiness than what is to be taken in from sensible things, and what is to be enjoyed in this life? This is a thought beneath the dignity and excellencie of our own souls: this is to forget the principles of our own being, and the great end we were created for. Certainly our ultimate perfection is to enjoy a blessed state of immortality, an unchangeable state of happiness; and if we observe the pulse of our own souls, which way they beat, and what we do naturally long for, we shall finde, that which we do most long for is immortality, and an unchangeable state of happiness: It is to be happy, and unchangeably happy, we naturally desire. Now it is a vain thing to expect either of these in this world: whilst we are here on earth, neither is immortality, nor an unchangeable state of happiness to be expected: No, this is reserved for the other world; therefore there should

should our thoughts and desires lye.
If we would be heavenly-minded, we
should say within our selves, We ne-
ver expect happiness till we come in-
to our own Country, where we must
spend the days of eternity: we never
expect happiness till we come where
God and Christ is, untill we come to
see him, be with him, and enjoy him
to eternity. This is the last happi-
ness God hath destinated his elect
unto: And this is the great happi-
ness our souls should be suspiring and
breathing after,

The



The Second Part,

Concerning

Earthly-mindedness.

Col. 3. 2.

*Set your affections on things above, not
on things on the earth.*

THere are two Observations
that have been propounded
out of these words. The first
was this :

*Observ. 1. That it is the duty of Christians to
seek after, and to set their affections up-
on the things which are above. If ye
be risen with Christ, seek those things
which are above.*

The second Observation was this,
*Observ. 2. That Christians ought to have their
hearts taken off from the world, and
from earthly things, and to have their
hearts*

hearts carried forth to an holy contempt of this world. Set your affections on things above, not on things upon the earth.

Having spoken to the main things which we intended from the former Point, we come to the second :

That Christians ought to have their hearts taken off from the world, and from earthly things, &c. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.

In the prosecution of this Doctrine, we have three things to speak unto.

1. To shew what we are to understand by *earthly things*.

2. To shew what it is to have our hearts *taken off* from the world, and from *earthly things*.

3. To shew what is that *holy contempt* of the world that Christians should be aspiring after : we ought to have our hearts taken off from the world, and to be carryed forth unto an *holy contempt* of this world.

I. What are we to understand by *earthly things* ?

I shall very briefly touch upon this: By *earthly things* we are to understand

stand all things on this side God, all things short of God and Christ. In the first verse it is said, *Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*: And at the third verse it is said, *Your life is hid with Christ in God*. So that the things here on the earth seem to be *opposed* to God and Christ; whatsoever is not God and Christ, is not to be the great and supreme object of our affection. By the things therefore here upon the earth, we are to understand these *lower* things, created things, temporal things. Another Apostle explains this at large to us, what we are to understand by the things on the earth: *1. John 2. 15. Love not the world, nor the things of the world.*

So that by things on the earth we are to understand temporal things, all things that are found within the compass of this lower world, *riches, honours, earthly delights and pleasures, long life in self*. Long life, though it be a blessing in it self, yet it is possible we may love it inordinately, as we do other things. Now these are the

the things we should not set our affections upon, viz. all things short of God and Christ; created things, temporal things, we ought not so to set our hearts upon any of these things, so as to make them the great and supreme object of our affections.

II. But the second thing is that which will take us up a little more consideration.

What is it to have our hearts taken off from the world, and from earthly things? How is the Text to be understood, when it is said, *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth?* Not on things on the earth. This we shall open two ways, *Negatively* and *Affirmatively*.

1. *Negatively*, by shewing what is not here meant, when we are bid not to set our affections on things on the earth.

2. *Affirmatively*, what is here meant, when we are commanded not to set our affections on things on the earth?

1. *Negatively*, what is not here meant, when we are bid not to set

set our affections on things on the earth.

Negatively, we may take it in three Propositions.

1. The meaning is not, as if we may not think of earthly things at all: we may think of earthly things as they are the works and gifts of God. The creature was given us as a glass to contemplate God in, and therefore we may and ought to think of these things, so as by them to rise up to the contemplation of God: Every creature is a spectacle, that in it we may seek for the Creator, who is the former and maker of it: that is a holy and a blessed use of the creature, when by the creature we are led to the Creator; therefore that is not the meaning, when it is said that it is our duty to have our hearts taken off from the world and earthly things, that we may not think of earthly things at all: We may think of them as the gifts of God, and as things to lead us unto him.

2. The meaning is not, as if we may not care for these things in a

*Creatura
omnis spe-
culum
est, ut in
omnibus
Creatorem
Artificem
quæras.
Augusti-
nus.*

mo-
Apo-
bis
is
the
Se-
wi-
th
E

a
t

mo-

moderate and subordinate way. The Apostle tells us, *He that cares not for his own is worse then an infidel.* There is a moderate and a regular care for these things, which is lawful. The Scripture commands men to *work with their hands the thing that is good, that they may give to him that needeth,* Eph. 4. 28.

Therefore there is a moderate and a subordinate care about temporal things which is lawful.

3. The meaning is not, that we may not use earthly things. When it is said a Christian ought to have his heart taken off from the world, the meaning is not, as if a Christian may not at all intermeddle with and use earthly things. It is the observation of a Learned man upon the text: *Davenant.*
The Apostle bids us not to seek or to set our affections upon earthly things, but he doth not forbid us to use earthly things. The Spirit of God makes it a piece of Antichristian superstition, that Antichrist commands to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth,
 1 Tim.

1 Tim. 4. 3. It is a part of Antichristianism, to forbid men to use the creatures of God which are lawful in themselves. And in the same place he saith, *Every creature of God is good; and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanks-giving.* It is true, we must onely use the creatures, but we must enjoy God: the creatures are not so to be used, as that we should stick in them, and go no farther; but we must use the creature to a farther end: we must use the creatures so, as by them to be led to God the chief good: yet use them we may in their place, and to bring us to the last end.

So much is to be spoken Negatively, what we must not understand by this, when it is said a Christian must have his heart taken off from the world and earthly things.

But then Affirmatively, what is it that is here intended, when it is said we must not set our affections upon things on the earth? What is it to have our affections taken off from the world, and from earthly things?

I shall open this in four Particulars.

I. Not

1. Not to set our affections on things on the earth, it is, not to make these things our last end and scope. Every man hath his last end; he hath something that he pursues, as his last end; now not to set our affections on things on the earth, it is, not to pursue these things as our last end: our last end ought to be above this world, to lye out of this world. I press toward the mark (saith the Apostle) for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, Phil. 3. 14. Paul had something as his end which lay beyond this world; which lay out of this world: we ought not to be content with an earthly happiness: we ought not to think, If we can acquire an estate, live in pleasure here on earth, provide for our selves and families, draw forth our lives to a considerable time, and have our days filled up with earthly comforts; that this is our last end, this is all we have to look after, and that we need have no higher scope then these things: A Christian ought to have an end, a scope, and an interest beyond all earthly things.

K

2. Not

2. Not to set our affections on earthly things, it is, not to place our happiness and felicity in these things; we should not take up our rest and satisfaction in these things. *When riches increase, set not thy heart upon them,* saith the wiseman, and the Spirit of God by him. That which men pursue as their last end, they are apt to take up their rest and happiness in it, when once they have acquired it: That appears from that of the rich man in the Gospel: *Soul, soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.* Worldly men make the world their chief good, and acquiesce in it as their chief good. Now not to set our affections upon the things on the earth, is, not to acquiesce in, and take up with the creature as our chief good and happiness. A Christian ought to say, God is my portion, he is my happiness, my felicity: God is the sum of all good things, God is our chief good: this should be the language of a Christian. A Christian should take up in nothing as his happiness but in God himself.

*Bonorum
Summa
Deus est,
Deus est no-
bis summum
bonum.
Aug.*

3. Not

3. Not to set our affections on things on the earth, is this, not to imploy our principal care and industry about these things, *Matth. 6. 33. Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof.* Our chief and principal care ought to be about spiritual and eternal things: and then we do not set our affections on earthly things, when our first and principal care is not about earthly things, but about those other things. To seek after, and to set a mans affections on earthly things in this place, it is with all a mans heart to desire after these things, with all a mans might and endeavor to seek after these things. Now in this sense, we should not set our affections on earthly things; that is, the main strength of our desires, the main strength of our endeavours should not run out to these things. It is an expression of *Austin*, We are commanded to have our tendencie towards the Creator, not towards the creature, that we may be made happy. The command is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy strength, and all thy might.* We are

*Toto corde
desiderare.
Davenant.*

*Ad Creatorem
tendere
jubemur,
non ad crea-
turam, ut
efficiamur
beati.*

no where commanded to love other things so; we are no where commanded to love the creature with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and might: we may and ought to love the creature in its place, and in subordination to God; but we may not love the creature as we love God.

4. To have a mans heart taken off from the world, it is, to be *spiritually* dead to the world. Paul saith of himself that he was crucified to the world, and the world was crucified to him, Gal. 6. 14. 'We ought to have dead affections, as it were, to the world and to earthly things, and to have living affections towards God and spiritual things: not but that the creature is to be beloved in its place; but *earthly things are not so to be beloved, but that God is much more to be beloved*: We ought not to love any thing better then God; nay, we ought not to love any thing equal with God. It is a sweet speech of *Anstin*; *He loves thee too little, who loves any thing together with thee, which he doth not love for thee.* This

Non usq; a deo diligenda terrena, quin & amplius diligendus Deus. Aug.

Minus te amat, qui aliquid tecum amat, quod non propter te amat.

is to be spiritually dead to the world, when if our love to God and the creature be compared, our love to the creature is but poor and mean in comparison of that higher love we finde working in our hearts towards God himself. A holy soul should be able to say, Lord, thou art dearer to me then heaven and earth, yea, then all things in heaven and earth: David said so, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, or whom have I on earth that I desire in comparison of thee?*

III. What is that *holy contempt* of the world we should be aspiring after? For thus it is express'd in the Doctrine; A Christian ought to have his heart carryed forth to an *holy contempt* of this world.

That may be opened in a few particulars briefly.

1. We should have *low and mean thoughts of the world*. The contempt of the world consists in this, in having *low and mean thoughts of the world*: he that contemns a thing, hath low and mean thoughts of that thing: He that contemns a thing, apprehends no great worth or excellencie in it,

for which he should esteem it. A Christian's contempt of the world consists in this; when he hath mean thoughts of the world, he sees no such great worth or excellencie in it, for which he should admire it. *Paul accounted all things but loss and dung for the excellencie of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, Phil. 3. 8.* A Christian that hath a true contempt of the world, apprehends there is little good or worth in worldly things, in comparison of God, and Christ, and eternal things. It is a great expression of the Apostle, *We look not to the things which are seen, 2 Cor. 4. 18.* We look not to them: What then? we overlook them, we despise them, we look above them; we have something greater in our eye, and therefore these things seem little to us: He that hath a greater good in his eye, overlooks a lesser thing; a greater good swallows up a lesser good. This is an *holy contempt* of the world, to have low and mean thoughts of the world, to look upon the world as having no excellencie in it, in comparison of God and Christ, and eternal things.

2. The contempt of the world we should press after, is this: we should not be too *anxious* and *solicitous* about earthly things: *Matth. 6. 31. Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?* that is, take no anxious, no solicitous thought about these things. To *contemn* a thing, is to neglect it, and not to take care about it: that is a signe of our contempt of the world, when we have no anxious thoughts about it, when we are not much concerned about it, when we have an holy indifference of spirit about it; we are thankful to God if he give us these things, and yet we are not too much dejected or cast down if he deny these things to us. *I have learned, Phil. 4. 14.* saith the Apostle, *in whatsoever estate I am, therewith to be content.* Contemnation of spirit with a mans present state, is a signe that a man is crucified to the world: For if a man be wedded to the world, then he is troubled and discontented, if he have not all he would have.

Contemnere est rem negligere, & de ea non curare.

3. The contempt of the world, and

of earthly things, consists in this; when a man accounts and thinks with himself, that he may be happy without these things. Let us observe this well; the contempt of the world lyes much in this; when a man accounts and thinks with himself he may be happy without these things; when a man lives under this apprehension, My happiness lyes not in these things; if God deny me these things, I may be happy without them; the essence of happiness lyes not in these things: This is a signe of the contempt of the world; he that hath such an opinion of a thing, as that he thinks he may be happy without that thing, such a man may be said to have a contempt of that thing: This is the contempt of the world we should labour after, so as to think we may be happy without these things. The *Sticks* say of their wise man, *He may be without many things, but he wants nothing.* Truly, a *Christian* should be able to say so, much more; though he be without many things, yet he wants nothing, nothing that is essential to true happiness: though he be with-

without many earthly comforts that others enjoy, yet he hath God and Christ, and the hope of eternal things to live upon; and he may be happy in these things, although he want other things. When a man is fixt in his own thoughts in the estimation of happiness, he knows he may be happy without this world: this is a signe such a man is crucified to the world.

4. To condemn the world, is for a man to think he is not made happy by earthly things, when he hath these things: as the Apostle speaks in another case, *Meat commends us not to God: If we eat, we are not the better; if we eat not, we are not the worse.* So a Christian may say, It is not any temporal thing that commends me to God: if I have much or little, it is not that which makes me accepted with God. But let us not be mistaken here. First, I grant that a Christian may see a vein of love in temporal things: *He delivered me, because he delighted in me*, Psal. 18. *David saw special love, peculiar love, in a temporal deliverance:*
 Having

Rom. 8.

Having given us his Son, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? And seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all other things shall be added to you. When a Christian sees temporal blessings flowing from covenant-love; when he sees them given in as appendices to greater mercies, so far he may see the love of God in these things. Secondly, Temporal things, so far as they conduce to a higher end, may be said in a subordinate way to conduce to a Christians happiness. The things of this world, so far as they conduce to keep a man from sin, and to make him serve God the better, so far they are to be valued. Prov. 30. 8. Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain. Temporal things, so far as they are means to keep us from sin, and fit us for the service of God; so far they are to be esteemed: but that which I say is, that temporal things considered in themselves, do not constitute or make

make up a Christians happiness. A Christians true happiness lies out of the road and chanel of these things ; and therefore when he hath these things , he ought to say , My happiness lies above these things. *All that abundance of mine which is none of my God, is but my penury and want ,* says *Augstin.* All earthly things , compared with God and Christ, are none of a Christians happiness.

5. The contempt of the world consists in this ; and I take it, that much of the spirit of the contempt of the world (if I may so express it) lies in this : When a mans heart is carryed off from the world, because his heart is reserved for higher things. *We look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen.* Paul's heart was taken off from present things, because his heart was reserved for, and taken up with higher things : *Our conversation is in heaven,* Phil. 3. 20. He had spoken of some before, that minded earthly things ; now he saith , *Our conversation is in heaven.* The reason why Paul had his heart taken off from earthly things , was,

be-

*Omnia mihi
copiosa sunt
Deum meum
non est, quia
scilicet est.*

because *his conversation was in heaven*; he expected other things. A Christian should have his heart rapt up with the contemplation and admiration of eternal things. A Christian should cry out as *Anglin* doth: *O to love God, O to go to him, O to die and perish to a mans self, O to come to God!* A Christian should solace and delight himself with the thoughts of the Divine presence, and account all things here on earth little in comparison of that presence. It is an expression which *Luther* hath: *We ought with a great soul to contemn this world, and with a full gale of affection to breathe after the glory of the future life.* This is the truest contempt of the world, when the thoughts, apprehensions, desires, and expectation of future things causeth us to reserve our affections mainly and principally for these things; when we look upon these as those things which mainly and principally deserve our love. A Christian should keep his heart reserved for God, and say, Lord, I would not love any thing that may not consist with my love to thee; I would not enjoy any thing that may

*O amare,
O ire, O
sibi perire,
O ad Deum
pervenire.*

*Debemus
magno ani-
mo conte-
mnere mun-
dum, &
pleno pectore
anhelare ad
gloriam fu-
turæ vitæ.*

may not consist with my communion with thee. A Christian should be able to turn his eye upon God, & say, Here is my riches, here is my true sweetness, my solace, my delight, my great happiness and felicity. *The Lord my God be is my life, my holy sweetness, saith Austin.* This is another discovery of our contempt of the world, when a man hath his heart carried off from these things upon this account, that his heart is reserved for higher things, and that other things have taken up his heart.

*Dominus
Deus meus,
vita mea,
dulcedo mea
sancta.*

6. The contempt of the world consists in this: When our hearts sit loose from the world, and we are at a parting point with these things: *Luk. 14. 33. Whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple:* doth not bid farewell to all things, is not ready to take his leave of all things. God doth not always call us to an actual forsaking of all things; but we must be in an habitual readiness to forsake all things when he calls us so to do. Our hearts must not be so riveted and glued to earthly things; but we must be in a readiness to part with them, and

*'Amicus
tuus est.*

and quit our interest in them, when God calls us so to do. When a man holds fast his estate and comforts, when it is clear God calls him to forgo them, it is a signe such a man hath little contempt of the world in him.

7. We ought to contemn the world so, as not to envie others for their worldly prosperity. When a man thinks that others are happie, and that he is not happie, because he enjoys not what they do; this is a certain signe such a man hath too great and admitting thoughts of the world and earthly things. A man that hath an holy contempt of earthly things, knows that men are not made happie by these things; and therefore if God hath given him higher and better things, Himself, his Son, his Spirit, his grace, pardon of sin, and the hopes of eternal things; he is not troubled to see God heaping temporal things upon such to whom he denies these things. Therefore this is another thing wherein the contempt of the world doth consist, when we contemn the world so, as not to envie others for their worldly prosperity.

We

We come now to the *Reasons* of the Doctrine, why we ought to have our hearts taken off from the *world*, and from *earthly things*.

1. Because there is *little* good in *Reas. 1.* earthly things. Earthly things are rather good in *shew* and *appearance*, then have any thing of *solid good* in them. The good that is in earthly things is more in appearance than reality. And as the world makes a greater shew of good then indeed is to be found in it : so what good there is in it, it is so thin and mean, that it is not that which men take it for. *Prov. 23. 5. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not ? for riches take themselves wings, and flee away.* Some observe, that here are two Arguments to condemn the sin of *Covetousness* : the one is taken from the *vanity* of riches, the other from the *instability* of them. It is the first of these that I am speaking of : *Wilt thou set thy heart upon that which is not ?* Riches are *not* what they seem to be : there is not so much good in them as men take to be in them. External things

things have little of *solid worth* or *excellencie* in them. *Wisdom* saith of her self, that she will *cause them that love her to inherit substance*: Prov. 8. 21. In the Original it is [*that which is*] that which hath *essence, substance, existence*. So the meaning is, Those that love wisdom shall inherit *substantial riches*, such riches as have *real worth* in them: Christ, grace, and spiritual things, they are real, solid, substantial goods; there is substance, solidity in these things. But now, external things they *are not*; that is, there is none of that substantial solid worth in them. Not but that the creatures of God are good in their kinde, and for the uses for which God hath appointed them: the Lord made all things, and behold they were *good, very good*. But when we say there is little good in these things, the meaning is, there is little good in them in comparison of spiritual and eternal things. *The good of one Grace is greater then the good of Nature, even of the whole Universe.* Also there is little of that good in them which men take to be in them: men think that perfection is to be found

*Bonum unius
gratie ma-
jus bono
Naturae to-
tius uni-
versi. Aquina.*

found in these things, they think that happiness is to be enjoyed in these things; earthly things are good in their place, and for the uses God hath appointed them; but they are not good to make a man happy, they were never created for such an end: and therefore, if men think that these things are good to make them happy, and that happiness lyes in them, they are lamentably mistaken.

2. Earthly things are *mutable*, *Res. 1.*
changeable things: as there is little good in earthly things, so that little good that is in them, is very mutable, variable and inconstant: This appears from the former Scripture, *Riches take themselves wings and fly away.* If a man should have a flock of Birds pitch in his Field, should he set his heart on them, should he think himself the richer for them? before ever he can get near them, they take the wing and fly away. So unstable and uncertain are the things of this world; no sooner doth a man approach to them, and think to suck a little comfort and contentment from them, but they are gone, and

1 Joh 2.
17.
1 Cor. 7.
31.

pass away. The world passeth away, and the lust thereof. The fashion of this world passeth away: Temporal things are *Herba marcescentes*, withering Herbs. All flesh is as grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field, saith the Prophet, *Isai. 40*. Should a man set his heart on a fine flower in his Garden? to day it flourishes, to morrow all the beauty and glory of it is gone: such are temporal things.

*Ut spem po-
nis in rebus
presenti-
bus, nec
presenti-
bus, nec e-
um dicen-
da sunt
presentia
unquam
stantia.*

It is an expression *Austin* hath, *Thou puttest thy trust in present things, which yet are not present*; for those things are not to be called present that have no consistence, that never stand or abide in one constant state. If a man would set his heart upon any thing, it is his greatest wisdom to set his heart upon that which is *immutable*; for if a man set his heart upon *changeable* things, his happiness must needs alter and change as oft as the things do, that his happiness is made up of. Now all earthly things are of a changeable nature, and therefore it becomes us not to set our hearts inordinately upon these things: If we love unchangeable things, we shall have

have an unchangeable happiness: Love ^{1 Joh. 2.} ^{15, 16, 17} not the world, nor the things of the world; for the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever. The scope of the Apostle is to dissuade us from the love of the world, and to perswade us to the love of God: the argument that he useth to dissuade us from the love of the world, is, because the world is a *mutable thing*; the argument he useth to perswade men to the love of God, is, because God is *eternal* and *immutable*. He that doth the will of God abideth for ever. One of the Ancients reads it thus: He that doth the will of God abides for ever, even as God abides for ever. And *Augustine* hath this expression, *Tenete dilectionem Dei*: Hold fast your love to God; that as God is eternal, so you may abide for ever.

3. Earthly things leave the soul ^{Reas. 31} unsatisfied after the greatest in joyment of them; *Eccles. 5. 10.* He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver. A man may quickly come to the end of all the good, the pleasantness, the sweetness, the delight,

that is in any earthly thing ; and when he is come to the end of that sweetne's which he did enjoy, he desires more ; therefore when a mans enjoyment hath been highest, he still desires more : Nothing can satisfie the soul, but some *transcendent* good, such a good as is so great, as is more then the soul can take in : So long as the soul is capable of taking in more, it is not satisfied. Now a man may take in all the delight and contentment that is to be found in earthly things ; and when he hath taken in all, he is capable of taking in more. This is clear in *Solomon*, who made an experiment of all things under the Sun ; and when he had tryed all, he cryed out, *All is vanity and vexation of spirit*. The capacity of the soul is too great, and too big for any earthly thing to fill it ; and therefore when the soul hath passed from one temporal thing to another, and tryed what is in one and in another, it remains unsatisfied still.

Reas. 4.

4. Earthly things will not comfort a man, when he comes to dye : *Riches avail not in the day of wrath* : it will
be

be little comfort to a man when he comes to dye, to think what he hath enjoyed, or what he is like to leave behinde him : nay, if a man have placed his happiness and felicity in earthly things, it will be the greatest torment to him, to think that he must leave these things. Come to a man that is at the point of death, and who knows for certain that he shall dye ; shew him gold and silver, bring forth his Jewels and most precious Treasures, tell him of his Lands and Possessions ; and how little will these things signifie ? Oh but tell him of everlasting happiness, assure him that death shall do him no harm, that there is a life beyond this, and that he shall be certainly happy in that life, and this will signifie something to him.

5. Earthly things are not our *last* Reas. 5.
happiness, our last and true happiness

is beyond any thing in this world: *The* Mundus non
world is not our country, but the place patria, sed
of our captivity and bondage. captivitas
Our non est.

last and true happiness, is to live in
the Divine presence, to see and enjoy
God in the heavens. Now that

which is not our last happiness, deserves not to have the main of our affections; that which deserves to take up our hearts, is our last happiness: we should be setting our hearts upon that which will continue always: we should be thinking of the life we must live in the other world, and how we are like to spend the days of eternity; that is the state that is worth thinking of, when time shall be no more, when there shall be no more changes, when we shall be wholly taken up in the contemplation of the *first original* of all things; that is the state that is worth thinking of, of which I can say, *Thus it shall be for ever*; that is the state that is worth thinking of, of which I can say, When once I am come into it, there is no *alteration* in it: Here is always joy, always life, always satisfaction: Here is no sorrow, no pain, no grief, no death, no fear of death.

Reas. 6.

6. Earthly things have no influence as to a mans happiness, so as of themselves to make him ever the happier at last. It is true, Temporal
bles-

blessings, so far as they are sanctified, so far as they further a man in the ways of God, and help him forward toward the heavenly Country, so far they are mercies, and so far they may in a sort be said to conduce to a mans last happiness; but consider temporal things in themselves, they have no influence upon a mans last happiness.

Love or hatred cannot be known by any thing under the Sun. No man can conclude by the meer enjoyment of these things, that he is the more beloved of God at present, or that he shall have the higher place in heaven hereafter.

Abraham saith to the rich man, *Son*, Luk. 16. *remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus his evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* God gives to some men their portion in this life: This they shall have, this is all they shall have; He fills their bellies with his hid treasures, but this is all they shall have, he denies to them the heavenly inheritance.

7. Earthly things are so far from *Reas. 7.* having an influence upon a mans last happiness, as that they do many times

Amor terrenarum visum spirituum.

Terrenarum appetitus tenebras animarum nostrarum ardet.

Stando aligati spiritualis vitii vix possunt non apprehendere.

blunt and hinder the soul in its pursuit after eternal things. *The love of earthly things is as bird-lime to the soul,* as to the pursuite of spiritual things : when a poor Bird is taken in the lime-twigs, his wings are pinioned that he cannot flie upward : the love of earthly things pinions the wings of the soul, that it cannot ascend to God and eternal things : *The inordinate desire of earthly things thickens the darkness of the soul;* the violence and impetuosity of the affections to earthly things, blindes the judgement, and darkens the eye of the minde. when the affections are violently set upon earthly things, the minde cannot see and behold the excellencie of spiritual things. Nothing so great an enemy to growth in grace, as the love of earthly things. A man that is addicted to the love of earthly things, can neither see the evil that is in sin, nor the beauty that is in holiness. *Men that are bound and tyed fast to the world, can hardly understand the name of a spiritual sin :* Tell a man that is immers'd and drowned in the world, of spiritual sins

sins, of spiritual pride, self-love, inordinate affection, hypocrisie, formality in duty, and the like; he understands none of these things; his conscience is so benumbed through the love of the world, that he is not sensible of these things. And as the love of earthly things dulls the spiritual senses of the soul, that a man cannot apprehend sin: so it blunts the soul in the pursuit after grace and holiness: the love of earthly things kills and extinguishes the love of God: *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 Joh. 2. 15.* I remember it is an expression of Peter Martyr concerning Solomon: *What love could Solomon have for God, who distributed and parted his love among a thousand wives?* And we may say, *What love can men retain for God the chief good, who part and divide their love to so many lower and inferior goods?*

8. It is the depressing and debasing *Reas. 8.* of the soul, for a man to set his affections on earthly things. The soul was made for higher things, and 'tis capable of higher things: the soul was

was made for converse with God the chief good : therefore when the affections are set upon earthly things, this is the debasing of the soul, and the depressing of it beneath its own dignity. The soul is an eternal principle, and must continue to eternity ; therefore eternal things are most suitable to it. Now then, when the soul is bowed down to temporal things, and taken up in them, this must needs be a great depression of the soul,

Use I.

1. Is it so that it is the duty of Christians to have their hearts taken off from the world and from earthly things, and to be aspiring after an holy contempt of this world ? This is matter of *Reproof* and *Humiliation* to us, that we are so little of this frame. How little are our hearts taken off from the world, and carried forth unto an holy contempt of these things ! In stead of contemning the world and earthly things, we magnifie these things in our thoughts, we make the world our great Idol. May we not take up the Apostle's complaint, and say as he did, *Many walk*
of

of whom I have told you often, and now Philip. 3.
 tell you weeping, that they are the ene-
 mies of the cross of Christ, who minde
 earthly things? They minde earthly
 things, that is, they onely minde them.
 There is a lawful minding of earthly
 things: but to minde them onely, or
 to minde them chiefly or principally,
 this is the thing so much to be deplo-
 red. And yet is it not so with many
 that are called Christians and Profes-
 sors? the main current and stream of
 their affections runs out to earthly
 things. What is it they are thinking
 of, projecting from day to day, and
 year to year, but earthly things, and
 worldly interests? *The world is trou-*
blesom and unquiet, and yet it is still
beloved; men are still fond of it: the
world is full of thorns and prickles,
and yet men grasp it fast. God hath
been rending our estates from us by
the Fire, decay of Trade, & other ways;
and yet we pursue the world as hard
as ever. He is a rare soul indeed, that
can make his Appeal to heaven, and
say, Lord, thou knowest I am infi-
nately more concerned for grace, for
holiness; for communion with thee,
 for

*Turbatur
mundus, &
tamen ama-
tur mundus*

for the assurance of salvation, then for any temporal thing. We do not blame men for their care and diligence in the duties of their Callings; it is their duty to be diligent in these: but that which we blame men for, is, that earthly things have the predominancie in their affections; that this poor world, and the interests of it, have more of their hearts and affections then God and Christ, and eternal things have. It was a great speech of *Austin*: *We warn and admonish you, that you do not love the world, that you may freely love him who made the world.* Our Saviour tells us, *No man can serve two masters*: there cannot be two chief goods, two last ends. Sure I am, the strength of a mans affections cannot be let out two ways at once. Now that which we are to be reprov'd for is this, that the main strength of our affections are let out upon other things, and a very little of our love (if any at all) is let out upon God and Christ, and eternal things. We ought to reserve the main of our love and affection for God and Christ, and eternal things; a little of the

*Motemur
ne mundum
amemus, ut
eum qui
fecit mun-
dum libera-
mus.*

the creature should content us, so we may have much of God.

So much onely in the General: but we shall endeavour to bring the *Reproof* a little more home, and to point out the disease more particularly that we are sick of. Therefore the next Use we shall make is this.

2. If Christians ought to have their *Use 2.*
hearts taken off from the world and earthly things, this Doctrine doth naturally and directly reprove the sin of *Covetousness*: therefore as under the former Point we spake something of *Heavenly-mindedness*; so under this Doctrine (having so fair an occasion given us) we shall speak something of the sin of *Covetousness*, or *Earthly-mindedness*. The sin of Covetousness is an *Epidemical* evil, a common sin, yea a common sin among us who profess Christ and the Gospel. He is a rare Christian indeed, that can acquit himself from the taint of this sin. The Scripture is frequent in warning us against this sin; and our Saviour gives us a particular and an expresse Caution against it: *Take heed and beware of covetousness.* Here is a double

Luk. 12. 15.

double Caution, a repetition of the same Caution: *See to it, keep yourselves from covetousness.* In some Greek Copies it is, *From all covetousness.* *Austin* observes from this Text, Christ knew, not we, how much it was our concernment to beware of Covetousness. We see no such great danger in it, but Christ saw a greater danger in it than we are aware of; and therefore he gives us a double Caution; he bids us *take heed* and *beware* of it. It is also *Austins* observation, that all other vices do *senescere, wax old*; onely Covetousness is that sin *which grows young*: and therefore it is commonly observed, that none are more addicted to this sin than old men.

Sola avaritia juvenescit.

Here we shall speak to four things, and shew,

1. What *Covetousness* is.
 2. What are the Signes and Symptoms of this sin.
 3. What are the Evils of it.
 4. We shall propound some few brief Remedies against it.
1. What *Covetousness* is. *Covetousness is an inordinate and insatiable desire*

fire after earthly things. Covetousness in a large sence respects all temporal things. When a man is inordinate and immoderate in his desires or appetite after any earthly thing, this is Covetousness in a large sence. But in a strict and proper sence, Covetousness is conversant *circa bonum utile*, about profitable good, or the good of profit. When a man hath an inordinate appetite after Riches, Money, Lands, Possessions, an Estate; this is Covetousness in a strict and proper sence. Now that which makes this desire unlawful, and brings it under the *denomination* of a sin, is when there is an *inordinate* and *immoderate* desire of these things. Every desire of temporal things is not unlawful, neither comes it under this denomination; but it is, First, the *inordinate* desire; Secondly, The *insatiable* desire after these things.

1. When the desire of them is inordinate, and not referred to a right end. It is the observation of a Learned man: Temporal things Davenant may be desired three manner of ways:

1. For the *necessities* of life.
2. Or else

else that by them we may perform works of *bounty* or *liberality*. 3. Or else for *fruits* sake : so to desire these things , as to make them our *end* , and to take up our *rest* in them. It is the last of these that constitutes and makes the sin of *Covetousness*. We may desire earthly things so far as they conduce to the necessities of this life , and so far as we may have opportunity to do good with them : but to desire them so as to make them our last end , and to enjoy them as our happiness , this is that which makes *Covetousness*. This is a sure Rule : No temporal thing is to be desired for it self , but in order to a farther end. We must *enjoy* God , and *use* the creature : we must *enjoy* God , onely *use* the creature in order to our enjoyment of God. Now when we stick in the creature as our last end , this is sinful.

2. As in *Covetousness* there is an *inordinate* desire of earthly things : so there is in *Covetousness* an *insatiable* desire of earthly things. Much of the formality of this sin lies in this : A covetous minde is never satisfied :

He

He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; this is the proper signification of the Greek word: *πλεονεξία* properly signifies an unsatiable desire of having more: when a man hath never so much, he still desireth more. Like a man that is sick of the Dropſie, the more he drinks, the more he thirsts: this is the covetous man. It is the nature of earthly things, that they cannot *reſtinguere ſuum animæ*, they cannot ſtanch the thirst of the ſoul: therefore the more a man hath of them, (if Covetouſneſs be predominant in him) the more he thirsteth after them.

We come now to the ſecond thing, and that is to ſhew what are the *Signes* and *Symptoms* of this Sin. Covetouſneſs is a ſpiritual ſin, and therefore cannot be ſo well detected as ſome other ſins may be: it is true, the objects of covetouſneſs are external things, as *money, riches, lands, poſſeſſions*, and theſe things are viſible; but forasmuch as theſe things may be deſired and uſed lawfully or unlawfully, according as the diſpoſition or affection of the minde is con-

M

verſant

versant about them; therefore it is more difficult for us to say that such a man lyes under the predominancie of that sin: But though it may be more difficult for us to fasten the guilt of this sin upon another, yet every mans conscience may be judge, how far this evil root prevails in himself. Now the Signes and Symptoms of this Sin, are such as these.

Signe 1.

1. When the *minde* and *thoughts* run out *solely* or *principally* upon earthly things. The Apostle saith of some, that they *minde earthly things*, *Phil. 3. 19.* that is, they do solely and wholly minde them, they think of nothing else: When a man thinks of nothing else from one end of the week to another but temporal concerns, this is a signe of the predominancie of this sin. Our Saviour tells us, *Where a mans treasure is, there will his heart be.* If a mans heart lye in the world, if his thoughts and affections lye in it, it is a signe the world is his treasure, the world is his chief good. It is true, no worldly business can be dispatched without *thoughts*; and he that hath affairs

affairs to do in the world, must necessarily have thoughts about them: but it is one thing to have a mans thoughts exercised about things that are necessary, and belong to his Calling; and another thing for a man *electively*, and upon choice, to let out his thoughts upon earthly things. If a man do not *electively*, and upon choice, let out his thoughts upon earthly things, he is glad when he is freed from the *cumber* of the world; he is glad when he hath an opportunity to be freed from his necessary engagements, to attend on holy things: Whereas, a man that mindes earthly things out of a *covetous humour*, the natural bent of his minde carries him to these things; and upon choice he desires to converse with these things, rather then with spiritual and divine things.

2. When a man makes the world his *greatest interest*; that is, when a man is more solicitous to secure the world, then to secure heaven: When a man is more afraid of temporal wants, temporal streights, then he is, that he shall miss *salvation*. It was

Signe 2.

M 2

the counsel that our Saviour gave,
 Joh. 6. 27. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth.*

We may labour for the meat which
 perisheth, in a sense: He that com-
 mands us not to kill, commands us
 to preserve life; and he that com-
 mands us to preserve life, commands
 us to look after those things that are
 necessary to preserve life. But the
 meaning is, we may not labour for
 the meat that perisheth, in compari-
 son of the meat that endureth to ever-
 lasting life. • We ought not to make
 temporal things our great interest;
 we should not be so much concern-
 ed about temporal things; as we are
 about spiritual and eternal. Now
 when a man is of this temper: I will
 secure my worldly interest; whatso-
 ever becomes of my soul; a few
 thoughts, a little care shall serve the
 turn in relation to Salvation; but I
 will make the utmost advantage of
 the world I can possibly; I will loose
 no opportunity of advancing my self
 in the world, whatsoever becomes of
 the interest of my soul, and of Sal-
 vation: This is a certain signe that co-
 vetousness is predominant in such a
 man. A-

3. Another signe is discontent *Signe 3.*
 with a mans present estate. It is observable how the Scripture joyns both these together: *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with the things that you have, Heb. 13.5.* intimating thus much, that if a man have not a holy contentation with his present estate, he cannot keep himself free from the sin of covetousness: *Godliness with contentment is great gain, 1 Tim. 6.6.* So much as godliness prevails, so far it makes a man content with his present estate; so far as covetousness prevails, it makes him discontent. When a person is quarrelling with the providence of God, and thinks God doth not deal well with him, because he is not so as he would be, hath not such accommodations as he would have, and it may be others have: It is a signe this evil humour prevails too much in him.

4. When all a mans *designes* and *Signe 4.*
projects are for the world: that is a mans *last end* which he designs most, intends most, & refers all things unto. When a mans highest designe is for

the world ; it is not the designe of his life to glorifie God, or to promote the great interest of Religion in himself or others ; but his great designe is to enrich and greaten himself : it is a signe that a man is an *earthly-minded* man.

Signe 5. 5. When there is no *stint* nor *bounds* to a mans desires : When, although God hath given a man the most liberal portion of these things, he is still desiring more. *Austin* compares a covetous man to Hell : Look as hell and the grave are never satisfied, but are always craving ; so when mens desires are boundless, the greatest affluence and confluence of worldly enjoyments put no limits to their desires, but they are as much craving as ever they were. This is a certain Signe of the predominancie of this evil. *Isai. 5. 8. Wo to them that joyn house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.*

Signe 6. 6. Another Symptom of covetousness is this : when a man useth *unlawful means* to acquire and get *earthly*

earthly things: when a person will lye, cheat, cozen, defraud, use false weights and balances, strain his conscience any way to get profit and advantage. *Austin* saith of a covetous person, *He is content with an empty conscience, so he may have a full chest*: A covetous man will strain his conscience any way to advantage himself. This is a certain signe of the predominancie of this sin. He that will hazard the loss of his soul for any worldly advantage, must needs love the world too much. When a man voluntarily commits any known sin, such a man apparently hazards the loss of his soul: therefore when a man to gain the world will hazard the loss of his soul, it is a signe such a man loves the world too much.

7. Another signe of covetousness, *Signe 7.* is, when a man places and reposes his trust and confidence in earthly things. *Inexplicabilis appetitus animi querentis divitias, & in illis tantum minde seeking after riches, and trusting quam in summo bono fidentis.* It is the definition of covetousness, which is given by a Learned man, That it is an insatiable desire of the

which a man desires and pursues as his last end before the acquisition of it; when he hath acquired it, he acquiesces and rests in it. It is proper to a rich man to trust in his riches; and this is apparent from that speech of the Rich man which our Saviour mentions, *Luk. 12.* when he had gotten riches together, he saith to his soul, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.* So *Job 31. 24.* *If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.* Job professeth his integrity by this, that he did not make gold his confidence; that is an argument, that it is the property of a covetous man so to do; and therefore the Scripture warns us not to trust in uncertain riches: This intimates that it is natural to men so to do.

1 Tim. 6.
17.

Signe 8. 8. Another signe of covetousness is this: when a man is of a *tenacious spirit*; when a man will be sure to hold fast all that he hath, and will part with nothing. Covetousness is an inordinate desire, both of *getting* and of *keeping* earthly things: as covetousness

tiousness discovers it self one way,
 when men have an inordinate desire
 of getting what they have not; so
 covetousness discovers it self ano-
 ther way, when their hearts are
 clung to what they have gotten;
 when they have an inordinate desire
 of keeping what they have. It is a
 Precept which our Saviour gives,
Luk. 12. 33. Sell that which you have,
and give alms. This is a hard say-
 ing, and few can bear it: It is true,
 this Precept ought to be understood
 aright, it is not binding at all times;
 for this is a Rule in Divinity, *Affirma-*
tive Precepts, though they are binding,
yet not at all times: But this Precept,
 when Christ saith, *Sell that which*
ye have, and give alms, is so far bind-
 ing, that a man should be ready to part
 with his estate, when God calls him
 to it: when it may make much for
 the glory of God, and the advantage
 of the Gospel; when a man hath a
 clear call to part with his estate, a man
 ought to be ready so to do. We are
 not to understand this in the Popish
 sense, as if we were bound to sell our
 estates and go into a *Monastery*: But
 when

*Præcepta
 affirmantia
 non Ligant
 ad semper.*

when it may make for the glory of God, and the advantage of the Gospel, and a man hath a call to part with his estate, then a man should be ready to part with it; that I take to be the meaning of that Precept. On the contrary, when a man holds the world so fast, that he will not part with a little of his estate upon the highest and best accounts; that is a signe of the predominancie of this sin of covetousness.

Signe 9.

9. Lastly, another signe of covetousness is a *parsimonious sordid spirit*; that is, when, though a man be willing to part with something of his estate, yet not in proportion to what God hath blessed him with, or is becoming of him. The Moralists observe, Covetousness is a sin opposed to Liberality: Now the Scripture teacheth us, *the liberal man deviseth liberal things*. The Philosopher observes, the liberal man will give for honesty sake, to whom it becomes him to give, and when it becomes him to give: A liberal person considers what is becoming the dignity of his person, place and condition, and he gives proportion-

Propter bonitatem,
& rectitudinem
quibus oportet,
& quando oportet.

portionably. When a man observes
no decorum, but suffers a person
much inferiour to him in place, in
dignity and condition, to excel him
in acts of Charity; this is a signe
of an illiberal and covetous spirit.

Thus have I given the Signes and
Symptoms of this sin.

3. I come to shew in the next
place the evils of this sin: there is more
of this sin in us then we are aware
of, and more evil in it then we are
aware of: Let us consider well the
evil of this sin.

1. Covetousness is idolatry. This
is twice mentioned in the Scripture:
*Ephes. 5. 5. This know, that no covetous
man, who is an idolater, hath an inher-
itance in the kingdom of God and
Christ, &c.* So *Col. 3. 3, 5. Mortifie
your earthly members. What are they?
fornication, uncleanness, inordinate af-
fection, evil concupiscence, and covetous-
ness, which is idolatry.* It is not for
nothing that this is twice mentioned;
a covetous man is called an idolater,
and covetousness is called idolatry. The
Spirit of God would put a brand
upon

upon this sin, the *blackest* brand ; and what is the brand the Spirit of God would put upon the sin of covetousness? he calls it *idolatry*. Oh let us take heed how we love that sin which God designs to render most odious and abominable. There are several reasons given by Learned men, why covetousness is called Idolatry. 1. *Negatively*, Covetousness is not called Idolatry, in respect of a covetous mans intention, as if he intended to make his money his God ; but in respect of *likeness* and *similitude*, because a covetous man shews that respect to his money, as an idolater doth to his idol. 2. *Positively*, Covetousness is called idolatry, because idolatry is one of the worst of sins. 2. Because a covetous person sets up his wealth and riches in the place of God. A covetous man *loves* his wealth more then God ; he *trusts* in his riches more then in God, and he *serves* his riches, and is more solicitous about them, then he is solicitious to serve and please God.

1. A covetous man loves these outward things more then he loves God :

God: that is a mans God, which hath most of his heart. The great Commandment is, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.* When a man loves any thing more then God, that is his god: Therefore it is well said of one of the Ancients, that a covetous man is guilty of idolatry, *not by the offering any ceremonies of worship to his gold and silver, but by the oblation of his own desires and affections:* What the affection of the heart goes out most unto, that is set up in the place of God.

Non exhibitione ceremoniarum, sed oblatione concupiscentiarum.

2. A covetous man trusts in his riches: It is proper to God onely to be the object of our trust. He that I make to be my God, he onely ought to be the great object of my trust. *Psal. 91. 2. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, in him will I trust.* So that whatsoever it is we make the great object of our trust, that is our God. A covetous man trusts in his wealth: *Psal. 52. 7. Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches.*

3. A covetous man serves riches. Hence is that of our Saviour, *Matth. 6. 24. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.* All a covetous mans care is to serve his own profit. He hath little care to serve and please God. This is the first thing to shew the evil of covetousness, it is Idolatry.

2. Covetousness is such a sin as doth in a peculiar manner alienate and estrange the heart from God. The School-men observe, that covetousness is such a sin as *maximè adhaerens creaturæ, & maximè aversum à Deo.* *fastest to the creature, and turns us away farthest from God.* The proper formal reason and nature of sin lyes in these two things: 1. In the aversion of the soul from God the chief good. 2. In the conversion of the soul to the creature: and covetousness carries both these two in it; it carries the soul from God, the chief immutable good, and carries it to the creature, an inferiour mutable good.

3. Covetousness is altogether inconsistent with the love of God, *1 Job. 2. 15. Love not the world, nor the*

the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Austin observes from those words, There are two loves; the love of the world, and the love of God: If the love of the world inhabit in us, the love of God cannot enter in to us: And hence he infers, Shut out the evil love of the world, that so thou mayst be filled with the love of God. When the heart is fraught and filled with other loves, there is no room for spiritual and divine love. This is a sure rule, There cannot be two last ends; if the world be a mans last end, he cannot love God as his last end; and therefore the love of the world is inconsistent with the love of God.

*Exclude
malum a-
morem
mundi, ut
implearis
amore Dei.*

4. Covetousness is such a sin as is most inconsistent with our communion with God. It is a speech of one of the Ancients, The Spirit of Christ loves a man that is a lover of the world. God is curious of nothing so much as of his peoples affections.

*Amatorum
mundi odit
spiritus
Christi.*

My son, give me thy heart, and, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. When those affections which should

should be reserved for God, are reserved for other things, God loathes and abominates such a man : *If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him, Joh. 14. 23.* God promises, if a man love him, he will make his abode with him : covetousness is such a sin as is inconsistent with our love to God ; therefore where the love of God is not, God will never make his abode with such a soul.

5. Covetousness is such a sin as is most directly contrary to the nature of grace, and the work of the new creature in the soul : the reason is, the nature of grace is to carry out the soul to spiritual things, and to cause it to desire spiritual things ; grace causeth the soul to minde a spiritual happiness, and to look after a spiritual happiness : grace makes a man see an excellencie in the pardon of sin, in the favour of God, in the image of God, and in conformity to God. On the contrary, covetousness causeth a man to place his happiness in external

ternal things; a covetous person placeth his happiness in those things which are *bona corporis*, the good things of the body: he regards not grace and spiritual things, which are *bona animi*, the good things of the minde. Hence it is that the Scripture ranks covetousness amongst the worst of sins; *Ephes. 5. 5. Colos. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 9.* Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. Here we see covetousness is ranked with the worst of sins: covetousness is as directly contrary to the nature of grace, as a gross sin, and in some respect more; and the reason is, because it is possible a man by surprize, and upon a sudden temptation, may be overtaken with a gross sin, when yet the *bent* of his soul hath been set against it: but covetousness consists in this, when the *bent* of a mans affections lyes towards earthly things; and therefore nothing is more directly contrary to the nature of Grace then

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this

this sin; and it becomes us to look to this, because it is so inconsistent with the nature of Grace: The thorny ground fell short of a true work of Grace, upon this account, because *the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches did choke the word.* Many a mans profession comes to nought, and never rises up to true grace, because the love of the world is predominant in him: though he may go far, and have some seeming good affections, yet all comes to nothing, because the world hath the predominancie in his heart. How much doth it concern us to look well to it, to see that we do not loose all our profession upon this accompt, that the world hath had more of our hearts then God and Christ have had?

6. Covetousness is such a sin as is most contrary to our *future* life: hereafter God shall be *all in all*: hereafter we shall live upon God immediately, without other things: In heaven, as we shall have no other happiness but God, so we shall desire no other happiness but God himself. If it were possible that the Saints and Angels could desire any

any thing which they have not, they could not be happy; for this is the nature of happiness, to have all the good a man would have. The Saints and Angels in heaven have God for their happiness, and they are satisfied in him, and desire nothing more. Now when the heart is carried out after other things, and pursues them as the chief good: this is most contrary to our future life. It was the speech of a wise and holy man: *Since God shall be all in all hereafter, the less we have to do with the creature here any more then we needs must, the better.* If we were of a right temper of spirit, we should desire earthly things no farther then were for present necessity, and as they were accommodated to our present state. True happiness lyes out of the road of these things; true happiness is in another chanel; true happiness is to see God, to love God, to enjoy God: *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* When we pursue earthly things as our great happiness, and have vast designs after these things; this is most contrary to our fu-

ture life, which is to enjoy God, and him onely.

Lastly, Covetousness is the *root* of many other sins. The Scripture tells us expressly, That covetousness is the *root of all evil*, 1 Tim 6.10. A covetous person sticks at no sin; so he may enrich himself, and compass his own ends, he will omit the duties God requires, and commit the sins God forbids. God enjoyns secret Prayer, Family-duties, and attendance upon the Ordinances; a covetous person is so intent upon the world, that he cannot finde time for these things: So for sins of commission, a covetous person will break through many a known command of God, to come at the world. Covetousness is a fruitful sin; a covetous person sins against his Neighbour, against himself, and against God. 1. A covetous man sins against his Neighbour; he extorts from another more then is just and equal, and so covetousness is a sin that is contrary to equity: *Covetousness exceeds in taking, and is defective in giving*; & so is a sin against equity. 2. Covetousness is a sin against mans self, by this

*Avaritia
excedit in
accipiendo,
& deficit
in dando.*

this sin a mans affections are disorder-
ed, and turned out of the right chanel :
Our affections were given us to love
God the chief good ; by this sin they
are turned aside to inferiour goods.
And hence is it that *Austin* calls that
a *perverse love*, whereby the will is
turned aside from an unchangeable
good, to a mutable changeable
good. 3. It is a sin against God; foras-
much as a covetous person for a tempo-
ral good contemns an eternal good. All
these considerations may serve to set
forth something of the evil of this sin.

4. I come in the last place to pro-
pound some Remedies against this sin.

1. As an Antidote against cove-
tousness, Let us consider, we must
shortly leave these things: that is not
worth setting a mans heart upon,
which he must shortly leave. We
know what our Saviour saith, *Thou* Luk. 13.
fool, this night shall they take thy soul 20.
from thee, and then whose shall these
things be? What folly is it to make
that our happiness, which we cannot
keep always? that is true happiness,
which a man may enjoy always; and

it is a *pityful* happiness that must have an end. Why should we covet that much, which when we have gotten it, we can keep but a little while!

It is an expression of *Austin* upon those words, *The world passeth away, and*

Quod vis? the lust thereof: What wilt thou? wilt thou love temporal things, and pass away with time? or else wilt thou not love the world, and live with God? It might be one good remedy against covetousness, to meditate of death often. It is Austin's observation, The disease of covetousness is by nothing better cured, then when the day of death is continually thought of: if a man could think this with himself, I must shortly dye and leave these things, this would moderate his desire to these things.

2. Consider, a mans life lyes not in these things, whilst he hath them: So our Saviour teacheth us expressly, *Luk. 12. 15. Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.* Our life lyes not in these things; and there are two reasons of it: 1. Because the abundance

dance of outward things cannot preserve a mans life: the rich dye as well as the poor, the noble as well as the ignoble. *Pale death with an equal foot knocks at the palaces of princes, and at the cottages of poor men.*

2. Because true happiness doth not lye in these things whilst a man injoys them: every creature hath vanity written upon it; and when a man hath most of the world, he still remains unsatisfied. No earthly thing is suitable to the nature and capacity of the soul: The soul is a spiritual thing, and desires a spiritual happiness; the soul is an immortal thing, and desires an immortal happiness; and therefore when a man hath most of this world, he still desires something more.

3. Consider, a little will serve the turn to carry us to our journeys end. It is not likely we should live longer then the rest of mankind have lived before us; it is no difficult thing to see to the end of our life: now a little provision will serve the turn for a short journey.

4. We shall have no need of

earthly things in the other state. It is certain we brought nothing into this world, and we shall carry nothing out of it : We shall carry nothing into the next world with us, but our grace : earthly things will be of no use to us at the end of time. Our happiness in the next world is a spiritual happiness : the holy Angels and glorified Saints are happy without those things we so much admire ; and we must be happy by another happiness at last, if ever we be happy.

Avarus nimis est cui Deus non sufficit.
Aug.

Austin.

5. If we would be kept from this sin, let us study *Gods all-sufficiencie* and the *divine perfection*. He is too covetous a person indeed, to whom God himself is not sufficient. God is a happiness sufficient for himself ; he is an happiness sufficient to the Saints and Angels, and therefore in reason he should be a happiness sufficient for us. God is the chief good, the centre of all perfection. *What is it that thou lovest, that thou wilt not love God?* If thou wilt love any thing, love the best thing ; if thou wilt covet any thing, covet the best thing : study *Gods all-sufficiencie* and

and the *divine perfection*, there thou wilt finde the highest object for thy affections.

6. Let our desires run out much after *eternal life*. It is an expression of *Austin*: *We ought, saith he, to be covetous after eternal life*. The more our desires run out in one chanel, the less will they run out in another. Did we covet to live with God more, to be admitted into the Divine presence, to live in that state in which the Saints and Angels live, we should covet other things less: this is the truly noble covetousness; we cannot covet this too much, to live with God in his eternity. Oh! let us love eternal life: If we have right thoughts of the future life and the future state, we shall see nothing worth desiring and coveting in comparison of that state.

7. Let us pray for a holy contentation of spirit with our present state. This is the Direction which the Apostle insinuates, *Heb. 13. 5. Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with the things which you have*. Contentation with our present

*Divina
providentia
non patet
falli.*

present state, would prevent covetousness; the reason why our desires are immoderate, is because we are not content with *Gods allowance*. *Divine providence is never overseen, never mistaken.* Divine Wisdom measures out to every man what is best; and if we could think so, that would keep our desires from being too violent and impetuous after these things.

Lastly, let us set before us the example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; he is the highest Pattern of holiness in every kinde. Christ, when he was in the world, he was Lord of all, yet he posses'd little; and as he possessed little of the world, so he did not covet and seek after the things of the world. His heart was wholly taken up in glorifying the Father, and in finishing the work which he had given him to do: he minded not gold or silver, lands or possessions; his heart was set upon other things. True it is, that having taken to himself, not onely our nature, but also the infirmities of it; he used the things of the world in his passage, as things accommodate unto
that

that state of Humiliation, unto which he had voluntarily subjected himself: yet a little sufficed him of these things that were necessary for the support of nature; so far was he from designing to heap up wealth and riches, and from seeking great things for himself in the world.

3. Of *Admonition*. To admonish use 3.
us not to set our hearts upon the world and earthly things. This is the counsel which the Spirit of God gives us, 1 *Joh. 2. 15. Love not the world, nor the things of the world.* This Admonition is most solemn: if this solemn Admonition, which the Spirit of God gives us, will not bear weight in our conscience; what little hope can we have, that any other Admonitions should take place? if so clear and express a Prohibition (*Love not the world*) do not bear sway with us, what should? *Wo to thee*, saith *Austin*, *if thou love created things, and forsake the Creator: these things seem beautiful unto thee, but how much more beautiful is he that made these things?* We are all of us too prone to fall into the

*Vae tibi si
amaveris
condem, &
deservieris
Creatorem:
pulchra tibi
sunt, sed
quanto pul-
crior est qui
ista for-
mavit?*
Aug.

the love of the world, and of earthly things. When first we left God in our Apostacie in *Adam*, we fell from God into the creature, and there we have stuck ever since; and it must be the mighty power of divine Grace to recover us out of the creature, and to bring us back to God: the love of the world is the great temptation to most of us. I often think of the last counsel which an holy man gave a little before his death: as he was drawing on toward his dissolution, he called his Relations to him, and gave them this as his last advice: *Make sure of Christ* (saith he) *and take heed of the world; I have found that my greatest enemy*: If the world be our greatest enemy, we have need to watch so much the more against it. That which we shall do more in the prosecution of this Use, is to propound several Considerations to take us off from the love of the world and earthly things.

First, Consider, the love of the world, and of earthly things, is a great wrong and injury done to God,

God. *He that loves the creatures more than God, offends the Creator.* We cannot love the world too much, but we must of necessity love God too little. *No man can serve two masters.* So much as our love is let forth inordinately upon the creature, it must of necessity be withdrawn from God. Now this is the highest Sacrilege and Injustice: Sacrilege, to rob God of that which is his due; Injustice, to give that to the creature which is not due to it.

Secondly, consider, the *Soul* was made for *greater things*: the Soul being an *immortal* and an *eternal principle*, was made to converse with *eternal things*, and to seek for happiness in eternal things. Therefore when we love temporal things, and pursue them as our happiness, we forget the true nobleness and dignity of our own souls. That which doth distinguish us from the Brutes, is an intellectual principle, whereby we are capable of contemplating and pursuing something that is eternal: the Brutes minde present things. It is the property of Sence, to minde something present

present, and to go no further. When we onely minde and pursue present things, we depress our selves beneath our own species, and bring our selves as it were into the rank of *Brutes* and *sensitive creatures*.

Thirdly, consider, there are *greater things* for us to love; there is a greater and fairer happiness that lies before us: we have God and Christ to love: there are eternal things that

Non satiatur animam nisi incorruptibilis gaudii vera & certa eternitas. lie before us. *Nothing satisfieth the soul, but the true and certain eternity of that joy which is not corruptible.* Who would fix his eyes upon a *Glow-worm*, that hath the *Sun* to look upon? I have loved thee too late (saith *Augustine*)

Aug. Sero te amavi pulchritudo tam antiqua & tam nova, sero te amavi. O thou that art so ancient a beauty, and so new and fresh a beauty, I have loved thee too late. We have the living and eternal God to love, and yet we love dying things. Well may we wonder at our selves, that having the infinite and eternal God, whom we might make the object of our affections, we should take up with things so far short of him. What are a few drops compared to the *Ocean*? what are a few weak rays in comparison of the *Sun*?

Sun ? what are all the *creatures* in comparison of the *Creator* ? God is an *infinite Sea* of perfection : there are no bounds nor limits to his perfections. In God there is all good that is *desirable*, all perfection *imaginable*, all perfection *possible*. Do we desire life ? he is the fountain of life. Do we desire wisdom ? he is the fountain of wisdom, Do we desire holiness ? he is the fountain of holiness. Neither is there any thing we can conceive to be truly excellent and good, but it is in him : yea, whatsoever perfection is *possible* to be, it is in God. God is such a good as is most infinitely infinite. O ! what folly is it then to have our hearts taken off from the infinitely-blessed God, and to have them set upon little narrow things ? It is an expression that one of the Ancients hath to this purpose : *The Angels are so inflamed with divine love, that all other things, yea they themselves seem vile to themselves, in respect of God whom they love.* Did we know God more, we should not be so fond of other things. Oh ! let us turn our souls upon God the chief good ;

Deus est bonum infinitissime infinitum.
Bradwardin.

good, there may we love freely, and cannot exceed in loving him.

Fourthly, consider, the world and earthly things cannot give *happiness* unto men. That is *wise* love, when a man loves that which will make him *happie*. Earthly things cannot do this. You may say, How doth that appear? That is easily made out in few words. Earthly things cannot give a man satisfaction while he hath them; they cannot keep him from death; they cannot comfort him in death; and least of all can they be a happiness to him after death. Now who would love that which will not answer the end for which he loves it? The reason why men love earthly things (although they will not confess it) it is, because they think to finde happiness in them: but now that happiness that men think to finde, is far from them. No temporal thing will afford that to a man, which he desires and expects from it. Men expect satisfaction from what they do pursue, but satisfaction is far from them. Why should a man be fond of that, which when he hath

and hath it, his happiness must be in something above it; and when he wants it, it is possible for him to be happy without it. If we had all the things in this world we could desire, if we are the children of God, and have indeed *tasted that the Lord is gracious*; there is something above those things that we shall still desire. Now if when we have the greatest abundance and confluence of earthly things, there is something else that we desire, and something else that must make us happy in the midst of these things, viz. the presence of God, and the enjoyment of him; and that it is possible for us to be happy in those things, without earthly things; then there is no reason why our hearts should be so inordinately set upon these earthly things.

Fifthly, consider, the inordinate love of earthly things is a *perverting* of the End for which God gives us these things. God never gave us the creatures, that we might make them our happiness, or pursue them as our last end; but God gives us the creatures, that we might see himself in
O them,

them, admire him in them, and pass from them to him. It is a speech of *Augustin* : The creature is to be praised for the sake of God the author and original of it ; not to be worshipped and adored, as if it self were God. All things are of him, and by him, and to him, Rom. 11. 36. All things are from God, and they ought to lead to him : therefore when we love the creatures as our chief good, and stick in them as our last happiness, we pervert the end for which they were given to us : the creatures were never given for such an end, but they were given for this end, that we might ascend to God by them. We ought to use the creatures, not to enjoy them. Now, then do we use a thing, when we use it to a farther end : we ought to use the creatures in order to our enjoyment of God as our last end ; but we ought not to take up with them, as if we had no higher end then to enjoy them.

Sixthly, consider, the inordinate love of earthly things is an argument of great ignorance and unbelief. Every man would desire and love the best thing :

thing: did he certainly know and believe that there are better things then these that are present to Sence, he would love those things. *We look not to the things that are seen*, 2 Cor. 4. Paul knew that there were better things then those things that are seen, and that these things were real and substantial; and therefore his heart was carried out after these things. Now because the generality of men do not see these things, nor are acquainted with them, therefore they desire them not. The world lies before men, as a fair and pleasant garden, and there is many a goodly flower to be seen in it; here is pleasure, there is profit, there is honour; these captivate the eyes of men; and because things invisible to the outward senses are not seen or perceived by them, therefore they minde not these things. But *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn the glory of God into shame? how long will ye love vanity; and seek after leasing?* Psa. 4. 2. What folly and ignorance is it, to think that there are no higher things then those which the Brutes are capable of conversing with as well as

you? The Brutes may have their outward senses delighted as well as you: they may be taken and affected with present visible things as well as you: but where are your souls in the meantime? where is your intellectual part? Can Reason discover nothing to you but what is present, and obvious to Sense? why then is *the candle of the Lord* set up within you? What foolishness and stupidity is it, to believe that there is no happiness to be found, but what is to be found in this world? As if the life which God lives, were no happiness; as if so be the life which the Saints and Angels live in above, were no happiness. While men onely seek earthly things, it is a certain signe that they are ignorant of these things.

Seventhly, consider, the inordinate love of the world, and of earthly things, doth greatly unfit a man for death. Die we must, that is certain, and the time of our life here is most uncertain. Now what folly is it, to be found in such a frame, as will certainly unfit us for death? *Pythagoras* saith of Philosophy, That it is

meditation of death. Certainly the Μαλὴν
Σαυᾶν.
life of a Christian should be a continued meditation of death : and if a Christian should always be meditating of death , that he may die well, die happily, and die comfortably; then certainly it will be his greatest folly to be taken up with those things that must greatly unfit him for death. Now there is nothing that will more unfit a man for death , then the inordinate love of earthly things. If a mans heart lie in the world , how loth will he be to part with the world ? No man is willing to part with that which he loves much. When a man that is a lover of the world comes to die , his heart is as it were rent from him : his heart lies in the world, and yet he must be rent from that which he loves so much. An *holy soul*, an *heavenly-minded man*, hath sent his heart beforehand into heaven ; and it is no difficult thing for him to be willing that his *person* should be removed there where his *affections* are gone before : but now an earthly-minded man , when his person comes to be removed out of the world, he leaves

his heart, as it were, behinde him, and it must needs be very grievous and bitter to him to part with the world, that hath seen nothing better then the world.

Eighthly, to take us off from the love of earthly things, *consider*, that all these things must have an end. *The earth also, & the works that are therein, shall be burnt up*, 2 Pet. 3. 10. Should a man set his heart upon that which after a little while must be consumed to ashes? If a man would love *wisely*, he should love that which he might always love. Nothing but eternal things last always; and therefore the truest wisdom is to love these things. It is easie for a man to think himself out of all the happiness of this world. A man may think himself beyond the happiness that is in riches, honours, or pleasures; a man may easily come in his thoughts to the end of the happiness that is in these things. Now should a man make that his happiness which he can think beyond? there is a happiness that a man cannot think himself out of, nor think beyond it, this hap-

happiness is our God, who is infinite and eternal; this is such a happiness that we can never come to the bottom of. Oh! it is good to love him as our happiness: if we love the world as our happiness, we and our happiness are like to pass away together. When the Apostle admonisheth us, *Love not the world*; what is the argument he urgeth? *The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.* The world is a *transient* thing; and as the world passeth away, so the lusts thereof pass away: when those things are gone which men had made the object of their love and affections, they have nothing left to set their affections upon. When this world comes to be burnt up, and the works thereof, none of those objects are to be seen or enjoyed, which now at the present draw mens hearts so much to them: Nay, (not to go so far) when men must enter with their naked souls into eternity, and must leave all these things behinde them; what will they have to love then? how stripped, and naked, and forlorn, may we well suppose a *carnal* soul, who was once

filled and fraught with *creature-loves*, and the love of earthly things, to be, when he comes to leave these things behinde him ! All the objects of his affections are left behinde him ; he hath none of those things left him which once he let out his heart upon. What a pitiful empty thing is a miserable soul, that is separated from the Divine presence ? while he lived here on earth, he made a shift to love the creatures, and to suck out as much contentment from them as he could ; but now he is in Eternity, he hath none of these things to love : And now it is a great aggravation of his misery, to remember that he loved these things that did deceive him.

Ninthly, The inordinate love of earthly things is a signe that a man is of an *earthly carnal spirit*, and that *his name shall be written in the earth.*

1. The love of earthly things is a signe that a man is of an *earthly spirit* : Every man is as his love is ; if he loves the earth, he himself shall be earth, saith *Augustin*. Every man is moulded into the nature of what he loves

*Talis est
quisq; qua-
lis ejus di-
lectio ; ter-
ram diligit,
terra eris.*

loves; if he loves the earth, he himself is turned into a piece of earth.

Austin observes, *That the two sorts or kinds of love that are in the world, have constituted two kinds of Cities; the heavenly City, and the earthly City.* If a man be a lover of heaven and the things above, he is a Citizen of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*; if he be a lover of the earth, he is a Citizen of this world: therefore let a man put the question to himself, and ask himself what it is that he loves, and he may know what Citizen he is. The predominant love of the world, and of earthly things, is a signe that a man is a *worldly* man, a man of *this world*, and that he belongs to it; and that he hath nothing to do with the heavenly City, and the spiritual corporation that is above.

ad 2. The love of earthly things is a signe that a man shall be written in *the earth*. It is a great expression of the Prophet, *Jer. 17. 13.* *O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be confounded; they that depart from thee, shall be written in the earth, &c.* When do men forsake God? when

*Caelo extor-
res, & eter-
num ad exi-
tium desti-
nati. Galati-
us.*

when they leave God, and adhere to the creature: that the following words make out, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters. When men forsake the living God, and embrace dying creatures, then they depart from God. Now all such shall be written in the earth: an Elegant expression; what is the meaning of it? *Banished from heaven, and destinated to eternal destruction*: So one Learned man interprets it. Calvin carries it much to the same sense: *Your name shall be here on earth, but it shall be blotted out in heaven*; that is, there shall be no portion for you in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Apostle saith expressly, *No covetous person, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God*, Ephes. 5. Or we may understand it thus: *They shall be written in the earth*; whatsoever account and estimation men may be of in this world, they shall be of no account above with God and the holy Angels; *their names shall be written in the earth*: they love the earth, and all the honour they shall have

have, it shall be upon the earth : their honor and esteem shall not go beyond this world. Earthly-minded men that leave great Estates, Dignities and Honours behinde them, they may be famous in the Records and Annals of this world ; they may be renowned for their riches, and the great things they have enjoyed here : but this is all they shall have, they shall have no estimation in the upper world, their name shall rot and dye on the earth ; they shall have no honour, nor carry any esteem in the heavenly Country.

Tenthly, Consider, there is much of vanity and vexation in earthly things : We know whose words they are, *All is vanity and vexation of spirit.* First, earthly things are vain things.

1. There is not in them that which they promise to us. Earthly things promise much more then we finde to be in them, when we come to try them : We think to finde much more good, sweetness, and contentment in these things, then indeed we finde in them, when we
come

*Vanum dicitur quod
re ipsa de-
stituitur.*

come to experiment what is in them. Now that is a vain thing, which is empty of that it promiseth; *that is called vain, which is destitute of solidity and substance.*

2. They can never *satisfie* us; now whatsoever cannot *satisfie* is *vain*. Happiness lyes in satisfaction: happiness consists in having all the good a man would have, in having all the good that he desires: while there is any good a man would have, and doth desire, and hath it not, he is not happy. Now there is no man, by the enjoyment of any or all earthly things, that hath all the good he would have; and therefore he is far from satisfaction, far from happiness.

Secondly, Earthly things, as they are *vain*, so they are *vexatious*; the labour and travail in getting them, the care and solicitude in keeping them, the fear of losing them, the grief that follows upon the losing of them, the *defectiveness* of something or other in them when we have the greatest abundance of them, the *bitternesses* that are mingled with them, bring

bring a great deal of vexation into earthly things. When men are carried away with inordinate love of earthly things, they pierce themselves through with many sorrows. He that intangles himself with worldly things, doth but provide darts for himself, by which he is thrust through. Austin in a discourse of his about the contempt of the world, hath a passage to this purpose. *The bands of this world have a true sharpness; but a false sweetness; a certain grief, but uncertain pleasure; hard labour, timerous and fearful quiet; they are full of misery, but empty of happiness.* *Qui mun-
dum se im-
plicat, tela
parat, qui-
bus confo-
diatur.*

Lastly, the inordinate love of earthly things doth greatly unfit us for communion with God here, and for the enjoyment of him hereafter.

1. It unfits us for communion with God here. God will not be affable and familiar with that person, who desires, prizeth, loves, and delights in any thing more than himself: The way to enjoy most of God, is to be taken more with God himself than with other things: When we
are

are more taken with God himself, then with all his gifts; when we are enamoured of the Lord himself, and God is more sweet to us then all things that come from him: this is the way to enjoy most of God. Wisdom saith, *Prov. 8. 17. I love them that love me.* If we love God himself more then his gifts, then shall we know what it is to be loved of him. *Job. 14. 21. If any man love me, he shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, &c.* but if we lavish out our hearts upon earthly things, and have great and admiring thoughts of them, and are vigorous in our pursuit of them, and God hath the least part of our thoughts and affections; God cares not for such lovers; neither may such expect to attain to any friendship or familiarity with him here on earth.

2. The love of earthly things, as it unfits us for communion with God here, so it unfits us for the enjoyment of him hereafter. In heaven, the faculties of the soul shall be immediately a-
 fixed upon God; the soul will be wholly taken up in contemplating, admiring,
 lo-

loving, delighting in God, in praising and adoring of him. Now when the heart is wholly taken up with earthly things, it is altogether unfitted and indisposed for such a life. The heart is coloured, as it were, with the objects that it converseth with, and receives a tincture and an impression from them. A man whose spirit is immers'd and drenched in the world, will be very unfit to have the faculties of his soul carryed forth upon God. The best way to have our souls suited and adapted to the future life, it is to keep our spirits at as great a distance as may be from present things. We should be saying often in our own souls: Oh the blessed state, Oh the blessed life that is above! Oh to see God, to love him, to go to him, to live with him, in his eternity! How sweet is that life! When we are without those earthly things which we desire, we should say, our true life, our true happiness is above, where there shall be no more need or use of these things: when we have the most of these things, our hearts should be carried

ried up above these things, and say, We expect, and look for, and long after another happiness; a happiness that is above these things. We should keep our hearts in the most reserved frame for the future life, and the future state: We should not suffer our spirits to mingle too far with present things: Our hearts should sit so loose to present things, that we may be ready to lay down these things, and to take up with the happiness that is above. If we suffer our spirits to launch forth too far into the world, it will be a hard matter to reduce them: and when the cry is made, *Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him*; we shall be very unfit to entertain his Call: If our souls stick, and be taken up in the things of time, we shall be very unfit and unready to deliver them up into eternity.



AN
APPENDIX

Concerning
Laying hold of eternal life.

I Tim. 6. 12.

Lay hold on eternal life.

The whole verse is read thus :

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Lay hold on eternal life.

LIFE is the great thing which we all desire : there is nothing we fear so much as death, nothing we desire so much as life. This Text acquaints us what is the true life : Lay hold on eternal life. Amenus vitam æternam : O Austin.

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Let us love eternal life. It is eternal life that is onely worth the name of life : therefore since we are so fond of life , since life is most pleasing to us of all other things ; let us love that life that is truly so. This temporal life which we now live , is not worth the name of life , in comparison of eternal life.

The Text contains in it a double Gospel-precept.

1. Fight the good fight of faith.
2. Lay bold on eternal life.

It is the later of these precepts that I shall a little insist upon : *Lay bold on eternal life.*

The Doctrine that offers it self to our consideration from the words , is this :

Doctrine. That it is the duty of Christians to lay bold of eternal life.

In this Point there are two things to be spoken unto.

1. The Object.
2. The Act.

The Object is, eternal life.

The Act is, Lay bold on eternal life.

So that, that which will bound our

discourse as to the Explication of the Point, will be these two things.

1. To shew what *eternal life* is.
2. To shew what it is to *lay hold* on eternal life.

1. What is *eternal life*?

I shall not speak to this so largely as the subject will bear, (that indeed were a noble Argument, to discourse at large of eternal life, and that would afford a long discourse) but I shall give some few Hints onely concerning eternal life, that we may a little conceive of it. I shall endeavour to open a little briefly the nature of eternal life, in seven Propositions.

1. Eternal life is the state of the blessed in the other world. Eternal life is the life which the Saints live in the presence of God. 2 Cor. 5. 8. Absent from the body, and present with the Lord. To understand this, we must know, that there is a *natural life*, and there is a *spiritual life*.

1. There is a *natural life*; and this we may again distinguish into the *animal life*, and the *rational life*. That which we call the *animal life*,

it is the life which we live in common with the brutes. There is a life which man enjoys in common with the brutes, and this is that which is commonly called the *animal* life. But then there is the *rational* life, and this is that life which is proper to men as men. There is an intellectual principle in man, whereby he is distinguished from the sensitive creatures: and that life which man lives by this intellectual principle that is in him, this is the *rational* life. But then as there is the *natural* life, so

2. There is the *spiritual* life. This also is twofold. The spiritual life is either the life of *grace*, or the life of *glory*. 1. There is the life of *grace*. The life of *grace* is that life which the Saints live here in this world, in Justification and in Sanctification. 2. The life of *glory*, is that life which the Saints live with God in the other world. Now the life of *glory*, that life which the Saints live with God in the other world, is that which in a strict sence is called *eternal* life. It is true, eternal life is inchoate and begun in this world, in the life of *grace*.

grace, in the life of Justification and Sanctification ; but eternal life is perfect and consummate in the life of glory, when we shall live with God in heaven. So that eternal life is that life we shall live in the *heavenly country*. It is said of the ancient Saints, that *they seek for a better country, even a heavenly*, Heb. 11. 16. Now this is eternal life, that life which we shall live with God in the heavenly country.

II. Eternal life is a *constant uniform life*. The life which we live in this world, it is bounded and limited by time ; it is a certain space and duration of things, and there is an end : but eternal life knows no end. *Eternity is always standing, always present ; thus, and always thus.* When we are fated down to live in eternal life, then we may conclude, As we are now, so shall we be always : there is no interruption, no cessation in eternal life.

*Semper
stans, sem-
per presens.*

III. Eternal life is a *life free from sorrow and trouble*. *Isai. 57. 2. He shall ever be in peace.* It is spoken of a godly man, how it shall be with him

after this life, He shall enter into peace. So again, God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of his people, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. This life it is a life of affliction, a life of temptation, a life of grief and sorrow, a life of trouble and perturbation: but in eternal life there shall be none of these things: eternal life is a serene tranquil estate.

IV. Eternal life is a life free from sin, and all the reliëts and remainders of it. 1 Cor. 13. 10. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect shall be done away.* Heb. 12. 23. *The spirits of just men made perfect.* When we come to live with God in eternal life, sin shall be perfectly rased out of our nature; those reliëts of sin, *Reliquia peccati* (as *Luther* calls them) in the Saints, which are as thorns in their eyes, and goads in their sides, shall be done away; and they shall be made like to God, holy in their measure as God is holy.

V. Eternal life is a life of perfect joy. Psal. 16. 11. *In his presence there is fulness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* In eternal life

life the Saints possess God, who is the chief good, and all good; and having God, who is the chief good, and all good, they must needs have all joy. The joys of this life are false, deceitful joys; they are far from satisfying, quieting, and contenting the heart: the joys of this life are bitter-sweet Tauxum joys; the best joys here on earth are Reg. allayed with many bitteresses. O but the joys of eternal life are pure, sincere joys; there is all joy, no sorrow; all pleasure, no grief. And then as they are pure sincere joys, so they are soul-satisfying joys; he that hath all the good that he would have, and can desire no more, must needs be satisfied: the Saints in eternal life have all the good they would have, and can desire no more: whatever various good things we sought after among the creatures; in eternal life, one God shall supply all. *Whatsoever* Quicquid *(says Austin)* thou soughtest after here bis quere- on earth, whatsoever thou accountedst bas, quic- for great here in this life, God shall be quid l'it all that unto thee. God shall be thy pro magno comfort of meat and drink, of Sun habebas, and Moon, of friends and relations. ipse tibi erit.

God shall supply all things to his Saints. Eternal life is a life of perfect joy.

VI. Eternal life is a life free from changes. This life is made up of Changes : we change from health to sickness, from settlement to unsettlement, from prosperity to adversity ; yea, we change from one affliction to another, and at last we change from life to death. So that we may

*Nunquid
non huma-
na vita
tentatio su-
per terram?*

say, *Is not the whole life of man a temptation upon earth ?* Oh but in eternal life there are none of these changes ; in eternal life there is one constant, uniform state of peace, joy, blessedness, and satisfaction. Oh do you not finde your selves weary of changes ? Is not this the secret language of your souls, When will these changes have an end ? O lift up your eyes on high, cast a look to the heavenly country ; there shall you finde that which you so much desire ; there is perfect serenity, perfect tranquillity ; there is no trouble or perturbation, nor fear of trouble ; no death, nor fear of death ; no changes, nor fear of changes : there is an even

serene

serene state of things. And the Lord in his infinite wildom causes us to pass through so many changes here on earth, that so we may long after that unchangeable state above.

○VII. Lastly, as that which is the complement and perfection of all, eternal life is to know God and enjoy him, Joh. 17 3. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* To know God in a way of Grace, this is the beginning of eternal life here on earth; to know God as reconciled in Christ, to know him as a Father in Christ, this is the beginning of eternal life: and to know God in the way of the beatific vision, to see him face to face; this is the perfection and consummation of eternal life in heaven. *This is,* says Bernard, *the Saints reward, to see God, to live with God, to be in God, who shall be all in all, and to have God who is the chiefest good.* And Austin speaks to the same purpose: *This is the full blessedness of a man, to see the face of his God, to see him that made heaven and earth; to see him that hath made him, that hath saved him, and that hath glorified him.* O

Premium est videre Deum, vivere cum Deo, &c.

what

what an inconceivable happiness must it be, to have the *Divine Majesty* always present to the eye of the mind, to see and behold the face of God, who is an infinite good; and not only to see and behold God who is an infinite good in himself, but also to see God who is this infinite good, willing to communicate himself to the soul, and to become an happiness to it. The happiness of heaven doth not only consist in this, to be admitted to the sight of God, who is an infinite good : but also in this, that we shall see the blessed God, willing to communicate himself to us, and to become a happiness to us. *Gen. 17. 1.* *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward :* As much as if God should say, Whatever I am, whatever I have, shall be all thine, so far as it is necessary to make thee happy. God himself communicates himself to his people, and he is their reward. *With thee* (saith the Psalmist) *is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light, Psalm 36. 9.* *With thee is the fountain of life.* How is it possible that the Saints are

Angels should want life, that see the fountain of life, and are united to him: they see the living God, who is life, and the cause of all life; and by adhering to him, who is immortal, who is an *indeficient never-failing spring of life*; they themselves are immortal in their happiness, and derive a constant life and happiness from him, who is the Fountain of life. We may not wonder that eternal life should consist in the knowledge and enjoyment of God: God is the Fountain of life; therefore they that adhere to the Fountain of life, cannot be supposed to want life.

Thus have we given some brief touches concerning eternal life; but alas, who can speak of this as it is? *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what the things are, that God hath prepared for them that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9.

2. But what is it to *Lay hold on eternal life*? Here lyes the stress of the Text, *Lay hold on eternal life*. This brings us to the second thing, and that is the act, What it is to *lay hold on eternal life*. I

I shall open this in seven Propositions, as I did the former.

1. To lay bold on eternal life, is to make sure our title to eternal life. Job 6.27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto eternal life; as much as our Saviour should have said, Labour to make eternal life sure, and labour to get a part in my Righteousness, as that onely which can give you an interest in eternal life. We see by experience, this natural life which we live here on earth continues but a few days; we see we cannot live always here on earth; nay, we see we can live but a short space of time here on earth: therefore this is our great interest, to look after an *induring* life, to lay bold on eternal life, and make that sure: Certainly that is *prudence* and *wisdom*, to consider how things will end at last; and these are thoughts proper for a reasonable creature. What must be my happiness after this short life is at an end? To have no hope or expectation of any thing hereafter, but onely to call upon what is to be enjoyed in this life.

this

this is to level my self with the brutes; this is to forget of what species and kinde of creatures I am, and that I was created to enjoy a blessed Immortality: For wherein doth man differ from the brutes, but that he is capable of an immortal state and condition of happiness, which the brutes are not capable of? We ought therefore to make sure our title to eternal life; this is the ultimate end and perfection of our being. Man was not created to enjoy an earthly happiness, consisting merely in the enjoyment of earthly comforts; but man was created to a blessed immortality, in the presence of his Maker. Consider what the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. 1. 4. *To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled; and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you: Our last happiness is reserved in heaven. To expect our utmost happiness here on earth, this is to forget the great and ultimate end, for which we were created, and to which we were destinated. We were not made to have our happiness in this world; we were created for*

for an higher happiness; our happiness is to live with God in the Heavens: This is the happiness we are capable of, and therefore this is the happiness we should make for of; *Lay bold of eternal life*; this is, make sure thy title to eternal life.

2. To *lay bold of eternal life*, is to see that the bent and tendencie of our souls be carried out after eternal life. *Lay bold of eternal life*; it is as much as if the Apostle should have said, Let eternal life be the great thing in thine eye, let the bent and tendencie of thy spirit be carried out after eternal life. Every one hath the bent and tendencie of his spirit lying towards something or other. Observe the pulse of your own hearts, and you will finde the bent and tendencie of your own spirits carried forth towards something or other. Some have their hearts carried out after the riches and pleasures of the world; some after pleasures, some after honours; The generality of men have the bent and tendencie of their spirits carried out after something in this world. No

God would have the spirits of his people carried higher then so; God would have his people look beyond this world, and beyond this life; he would have the bent and tendencie of their spirits to lye towards eternal life. *Lay bold on eternal life.* Calvin *Contemto*
 expounds it thus; *Contemni this world,* *mundo, illuc*
and raise thy thoughts higher. *enitere.*
 This is the force of this expression, *Lay* *Calv.*
bold on eternal life; contemn this world, and raise thy thoughts to something higher: Let this world seem a little thing in thy eye; and let eternal life be the *mark* and *white* in thy eye; let thy desires and longings be carried out after life. We ought to *lay bold on eternal life;* that is, we ought to set eternal things as the fairest things in our eye: the main of our desires, inclinations and affections should be carried out that way: Our hearts should be carried above this world, and our affections should be soaring up aloft to the enjoyment of God in the next world. It is an emphaticall expression of the Apostle Paul, Phil. 3. 14. *I press towards the mark for the prize of*

of the high calling of God in Christ
 Jesus. The words in the Original
 are very emphatical, as much as if he
 had said, I press towards eternal glory,
 as making that my uttermost end and
 scope. Eternal life should be our scope,
 the great thing that we should breath
 and aspire after : whatsoever is short
 of the injoyment of God in heaven,
 should seem but a little thing to us.
 It is a speech of Luther : We ought
 with a great soul to contemn this world,
 and with a full gale of affection
 breath after the glory of the future
 life.

3. To lay hold on eternal life, is to
 have our thoughts fixt and intent upon
 eternal life. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Looking for
 and hastening unto the coming of the
 day of God. 2 Cor. 4. 18. We look not
 to the things which are seen, but to the
 things which are not seen. We ought
 to have our hearts taken up much
 with the contemplation of the things
 of the invisible world. Though it
 be but a little of the glory of heaven
 and the blessedness of eternal life
 that we can apprehend, yet some-
 thing we may understand of it, as
 the

the Word hath revealed it. The Word gives us some glimpses of the heavenly state : the Word tells us, that we shall be present with the Lord. 1 Cor. 5. Absent from the body, and present with the Lord. The Word tells us, that we shall be ever with the Lord, 1 Thess. 4. 17. The Word tells us, we shall see God, Matth. 5. 8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The Word tells us, we shall be like him, 1 Joh. 3. 2. The Word tells us, that our vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body, Phil. 3. 21. The Word tells us, that all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, Rev. 21. 4. and that everlasting joy shall be upon our heads, Isai. 35. 10. These things, and much more, doth the Scripture speak of the glory of the future life. Now our thoughts and meditations should work on these things. He that hath a fair inheritance left him, will be willing some time or other to go to see it ; we have the heavenly inheritance given to us, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens for us. Now since there is so

1 Pet. 1. 4.

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great

great an inheritance reserved for us; we should not slight it, but be willing, as often as may be, to take a prospect of it by faith. Nothing is so sweet as the contemplation of eternal things: the contemplation of eternal things is much more sweet than the highest enjoyment of present sensible things. Eternal things satisfy and quiet the minde; no temporal thing can do it: let us then lay hold on eternal life in this sense: let us keep our thoughts fixt and intent upon it.

4. To lay hold on eternal life, it is to pursue after it in our endeavours. As the bent and tendencie of our affections should lie towards eternal life, so we should pursue after it in our endeavours. *Lay hold on eternal life.* The Greek word signifies to pursue after a thing, and in pursuing after it, to apprehend and take hold of it. The main scope of our endeavours should be to attain eternal life: all our endeavours should run out that way, that we may attain eternal life. We should never think that we can pray too much, that we can be-
lieve

Ἐμῶν
Ἐνδοξία.

lieve in Christ too much, that we can love God too much, that we can be too much in obedience and holy walking, so we may but attain eternal life in the end. *Rom. 2. 7. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life.* The meaning is: God will certainly give and bestow eternal life on them who by a patient continuance in well doing seek for it. But we may not mistake here; we ought not to think that God gives us eternal life upon the account of the *merit* of any thing that we do; it is the righteousness and obedience of Christ onely, that gives us a right and a title to eternal life. But thus we are to conceive of it: This is the race and course that God hath appointed us to run; God hath appointed us to run this course and race of faith and obedience here on earth, that so we may come to eternal life in the end. Hence is that of *Paul*, 2 *Tim. 4. 7, 8.* *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* What then? Henceforth there is laid

up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me onely, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Certainly Paul did not expect eternal life upon the merit of his obedience, or of his services; but Paul knew that God had appointed him such a course of obedience to run here on earth; and his course being finished, he knew that God would be faithful to give him the Crown. God hath propounded and set before us the Crown of eternal life: it becomes us to pursue after this Crown with our uttermost endeavours, that we may attain it. *Rev. 2. 10. Be thou faithful to the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.* O how sweet, how unexpressibly sweet will it be, to be sure of eternal life when this natural life fails! If we be faithful to the death, we shall then have the crown of life: that is, If we persevere in a way of faith and obedience to the end, we shall have the crown of eternal life and immortality set upon our heads, when this short life doth expire. *Be thou faithful un-*

to death, and I will give thee the crown of life : it is as much as if Christ had said, I will give thee eternal life, when this natural life is at end.

1. To lay hold on eternal life, it is to live much in the hope and expectation of eternal life. Titus 1. 2. In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.

2. Rom. 5. 2. We rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God. The main of our hopes should not lie in this world, we should not fancie to our selves, and expect an happiness here on earth : but our great hope should be above ; we should cast anchor within the veil, expect happi-

Heb. 6. 19.

ness in what is to be enjoyed on the other side of time. If the main of our hopes and expectation be in this life, we and our hopes are like to perish together ; for we our selves must die, and the things we hope for, and make account of as our happiness, they must die and perish : it is good therefore to have such an hope as will not fail us, nor deceive us. If we look for the main of our happiness, yea our most truly true happiness in the next world, not in this world, this is such

a hope as will never deceive us. A man that hath fixt his hopes in eternal things, when he hath lost any temporal thing, the main of his happiness is still where it was: his hopes and expectations were carried above this world, and therefore whatsoever his losses and disappointments were here on earth, this doth not shake his happiness: his happiness was placed elsewhere before, and he is at the same point still.

6. To lay hold on eternal life, it is, *not to suffer the comfort of eternal life to be wrested from us.* As we ought to live much in the hope and expectation of eternal life; so we ought to take comfort in the hope and expectation of eternal life. *Rom. 12. 12. Rejoycing in hope.* As we ought to hope for eternal life; so we ought to rejoyce in the hope of eternal life. I conceive that much of the force of the Text lies here: *Lay hold on eternal life unto which thou art called, and hast made a good profession before many witnesses.* It is as much as if the Apostle had said, *Thou hast a true and an undoubted title to eternal life, thou*
hast

hast a firm sure title to eternal life ;
 thy vocation and calling as a Christi-
 an, entitles thee to eternal life : *Lay*
hold on eternal life, unto which thou
art called : that eminent profession of
 faith which thou hast made as a Chri-
 stian, and as a Minister, both in thy
 life and doctrine ; this gives an evi-
 dence and proof of thy right and ti-
 tle to eternal life. Now this is the
 force of the Apostles argument : Since
 thou hast so firm a title to eternal
 life, lay claim to it as thy own ; live
 in the hope and comfort of it, and
 do not suffer the comfort of eternal
 life to be wrested from thee. Much
 of the meaning of the Text seems to
 be contained in this. The Greek
 word, as it signifies to pursue after a
 thing, so also to *hold it fast*, and re-
 tain it when once we have gotten it.
 So that the designe of the Apostle is
 to perswade *Timothy* to hold firm and
 fast the hope of eternal life ; not to
 part with the hope of salvation up-
 on any terms. *Lay hold on eternal*
life : it is as much as if it had been
 said, Do not part with thy hopes of
 salvation and eternal life upon any
 terms ;

terms. The stedfast assured hope of salvation, is the great thing that must carry us thorow the difficulties, sufferings, and afflictions of our pilgrimage here on earth. Therefore doeth the Apostle exhort the *Thessalonians* that they would take for an helmet the hope of salvation, 1 Thess. 5. 8. Putting on the brestplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. Intimating thus much, that if they had a well-grounded hope of salvation, this would fortifie them against all the afflictions they were to meet with here by the way. What ever afflictions, sufferings and troubles we meet with here in this world, if we can cast an eye to the heavenly country, and see that we have a part there, all is well above: there is none of those troubles, fears, sorrows, where the main of our hope, happiness, and expectation lies. Therefore let us not part with or let go the comfort of eternal life: if we part with the comfort of eternal life, we lose that which must be the standing comfort of our life: nothing can bear us up under the afflictions of this life,

life, but the solid well-grounded assurance of eternal life.

Lastly, To say bold of eternal life, it is to look after the first fruits of the spirit, and to labour after an inchoate possession of eternal life in our souls here on earth. Our Saviour teacheth us, *He that eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood hath eternal life.* Joh. 6. 54. He hath it, that is, he hath it in the beginning of it. And concerning his Sheep, he saith, *I give them eternal life,* Joh. 10. He speaks in the present tense, what he doth do for the present: *I give unto them eternal life.* Christ hath already made over eternal life to his people, he hath given them a right and a title to it, and he hath given them the beginning of it in their souls here on earth: it is a great Text, Joh. 4. 14. *The water that I shall give, shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* The plain meaning seems to be, that Grace, and that of the Spirit of God which Christ hath given to his people here on earth, shall never leave them till it hath brought them to eternal life. The Spirit of God that
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is in the hearts of the Saints, and the Grace of God which is wrought in them, shall never leave them till it hath brought them to eternal life. Hence it is that the Spirit of God is called *the earnest of our inheritance*, Eph. 1. 14. an earnest is part of the bargain: the Spirit of God that dwells in the hearts of Believers, is an earnest of eternal glory: for what is heaven, but a fuller manifestation of the Spirit of God in us, which manifests and puts it self forth in part in us here on earth? So that so far as we are sensible of the indwelling of the Spirit of God, and the operation of it in our souls; so far we have an earnest of eternal glory. This is that *water* which shall be a *well of water springing up into everlasting life*. We should labour therefore to be sensible of the indwelling of the Spirit, and of the operation of the Spirit of God in us, in a way of grace and of comfort. In this sense we should *lay hold of eternal life*; that is, we should be earnestly pressing and making after it in our own souls: We should pray earnestly

ly that God would let down more of eternal life into our souls here on earth: As he once said, *Lord come down to me, or take me up to thee.* We should pray that eternal life may come down more into our souls here on earth: This should be the highest ambition of a Christian, to perceive and feel more of the dawnings & puttings forth of eternal life in his soul here on earth. It is not impossible for us to perceive and feel the dawnings and puttings forth of eternal life in our souls here on earth; and this is that we should earnestly pray for. Some of the last words of Mr. Rutherford were these: *Glory, glory, dwells in Emmanuels land.* We should pray for the clearest sights and prospects that may be of the heavenly glory: The clearer sights we can get of eternal things, the more shall we finde our hearts crucified to the things of time, and the more shall we finde our hearts carried up aloft to those things that are above, even whilst we are fain to use these other things for our present necessitie.

We come now to the Reasons of the Doctrine, why we ought to *lay hold on eternal life.*

1. This

Reason 1.

1. This life is a *short transient thing*, it soon glides and slips away. How soon do we pass from one state to another? from infancie to childhood, from thence to youth, thence to grown age, and from thence to old age and death? *My days are swifter then a weavers shuttle*, Job 7. 6. *Swifter then a post they go away*, Job 9. 25. This life is a vanishing thing: it is an easie prospect to see to the end of it: the longest life here on earth is nothing to eternity: Therefore, since this life is so slippery, short and uncertain, it is our great wisdom to set our hearts upon that life that is solid, durable, permanent: What wisdom is it to set our hearts upon that which is not permanent? *We have here no continuing city*, Heb. 13. 14. This life is made up of changes and vicissitudes, and abides in no consistency; it is our great concernment to minde that life which is stable and enduring.

Reason 2.

2. Eternal life is that state that we must rest and abide in. That life which we shall live in the other world, will always stick and abide by

by us; as we are then, we shall ever be. It is not so with us now; we are not now, as we shall ever be: we are still changing from one state to another. But eternal life is that state we shall always rest and abide in. When once we are entred into eternal life, we may say, It shall never be otherwise with me, then now it is: this is the state I must take up with, and thus it shall be for ever. Now doth it not become us to be reaching out in our souls after this state? Certainly we ought to overlook this life, and the whole of our time, as a little short thing; and fasten our eyes upon the unchangeable state above, where we must fix and abide for ever. *We look not to the things that are seen, for they are temporal; but to the things which are not seen, for they are eternal,* 2 Cor. 4. 18.

Reason 3. Eternal life is the only true life; it is the most noble and excellent life. What a poor life is this life, to converse with this world, and the things of it, in comparison of eternal life, in which we shall converse with God and the holy Angels?

What

What a poor life is this life, which is made up of wants, of sorrows, of complaints, of miseries, of distresses, of the constant fear and expectation of death; in comparison of that life, where there is all joy, no sorrow; all fulness, no want; all satisfaction, no complaint; all happiness, no misery; all life, no death, nor fear of death? Oh this is the life that we should be suspiring and breathing after.

Reason 4.

4. We ought to *lay hold on eternal life*, because the thoughts and expectation of eternal life will carry us up above the difficulties, troubles and afflictions of this life. He that seeth the Port before him, though he be out at Sea, and is tossed with waves and tempests, yet he knows, if he can get safe to the Port, all is quiet, placid, and serene there. He that hath a prospect (by the eye of Faith) of *eternal life*; and the *heavenly Country*, though he be tossed up and down with many afflictions, trials and distresses here, yet he knows all is tranquil and serene above. *Ibi nulla mors, nulla aegritudo.* There is no sick-

sickness, no death. The thoughts of eternal life may well swallow up all our afflictions. This life is but for a moment, in eternal life there shall be none of these things to trouble or disquiet us. Let us wait patiently for the *blessed hope*, and the revelation of eternal life, and we shall know these sorrows no more.

5. *If we lay hold on eternal life, Reason 5.* death will be no surprise or terror to us: when this life fails, we shall have another life in view; nay, we shall feel the beginnings of another life in us. *This is eternal life, to know thee, &c. Job. 7. 3.* So much as we know God, adhere to him, rest in him, live upon him, and are satisfied with him; we have the beginning of eternal life, and this is such a life as shall never end. That natural life which is in a Saint fails, and must have an end. Oh! but there is in his soul the seed of eternal life. *Job. 4. 14.* *The water that I shall give, shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life.* A true Believer hath the Spirit of God, and the grace of the Spirit dwelling in him; and this

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is the seed of eternal life. The Spirit of God which hath begotten the knowledge of God and love to God in the soul of a Saint here on earth, will continue that knowledge of God and love to God in the soul to eternity; yea, in eternal life, this knowledge, this love shall be perfected and consummated. Hence is that of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 10. *The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* The body dies, and the life of it perisheth and vanisheth away; but the spirit, the soul of a Saint, which is the seat of Grace, and the habitation of the Spirit of God, continueth and lives when the life of the body ceaseth. If the soul should dye with the body, then grace it self must be extinct and perish: But (saith the Apostle) *the spirit is life because of righteousness.* The spirit of a godly man having a principle of righteousness in it, continues in being; and the spiritual life of it remains, when the body dyes. It is true, the soul of a wicked man is immortal, and continues to live when his body dyeth; but the

life

life which remains to a wicked man after this life, being a life of misery and torment, the Scripture chooseth to call it by the name of death rather than of life: But a godly man enjoys an happy and a blessed life in his soul when this life ceaseth: Hence is it that we read of *the spirits of just men made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. And Paul desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which was far better, Phil. 1. 23. Now when we feel such a life in us as cannot expire, neither can be taken away from us, why should we fear death? Luther observes, that the great cause why men fear death, is a secret suspicion that lies at the bottom of their hearts, *Quasi non semper victuri*; as if they should not live always. If I am sure to live, why do I fear death? If we lay hold on eternal life, and finde the beginnings of that life in our souls, we have that life set up in us which cannot expire. Job. 6. 44. *He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, bath eternal life.* How can that be lost which is eternal? that which is eternal cannot be lost. It is a great skill

to be able to distinguish between this natural life which we live in common with other men, and that spiritual life which we live as Christians. The natural life of a Saint is subject to death as other mens is, although the curse of it be taken away; but there is a life in a Saint, and that is the life which he lives in, and by the Spirit of God: and this is such a life as cannot be extinguished. We should labour for that spiritual skill, as to be able to distinguish between these two kinds of life; and not be without hope as other men, when this natural life ceaseth; we should remember there is a life in us that cannot dye. If we have begun to know God, to love God, to live upon him, and to live to him here on earth; we shall not cease to know him, to love him, to live upon him, to live to him in eternity, and to eternity.

Use 1.

1. We come now to the Uses of this Doctrine; and there are only two that we shall make of it. The first Use shall be of Reprehension. If we ought

ought to *lay hold on eternal life*, two things are hence to be reprehended.

1. That we are so much taken up in following this world, and in the pursuit of temporal things.

2. That we are so much addicted to the love of this life.

1. We are to be reprehended, that we are so much taken up in following this world, and in the pursuit of temporal things. *Lay hold on*

eternal life: If we ought to *lay hold on eternal life*, then we ought to live above the world, and condemn it.

The eager pursuit of this world is almost contrary to our *laying hold on eternal life*. We cannot pursue two

things at once; while we are pursuing hard after the world, we must needs let Heaven and Salvation go.

The greatest part of men think not on eternal things; they live as if they were always to live here on earth: they never think of a future state, nor do they provide for it. But if we

ought to *lay hold of eternal life*; if that ought to be the mark and scope in our eye; that shews that we are far wide of that which ought to be

our true mark and scope; when we are wholly taken up with temporal things, and neglect eternal.

II. We are to be reprehended, that we are so much addicted to the *love of this life*. We are commanded to love eternal life, and to lay hold on that, but we are fond of this life, and loth to part with it. He is a rare soul, that is satisfied with life here on earth, and hath such an apprehension of the reality and excellencie of eternal life, that this life groweth out of esteem with him. I grant that this natural life is a blessing, as other temporal blessings are; but as it is possible for us to love other things too much; so it is possible, yea, too common to love this life too much; and it is the wisdom of God to im-bitter this life to us by many afflictions, because we are so fond of it; and that he may weary us out of it, and cause us to long for that which is the true life. *Vita longa, longa infirmitas*; a long life is a long infirmity; and we may adde, *Longa tentatio*, a long temptation. What is our whole life, but a life of tryals and temptations?

It

It is true, we may value and prize life for these two ends.

1. To work out our Salvation, to make ready for the coming of the Bridegroom.

2. That we may do some work and service for God; that we may glorifie him upon the earth, and finish the work that he hath given us to do. But to be over-fond of this life meerly for lifes sake, is a certain signe of unbelief: It is a signe we have little knowledge of another life, little acquaintance with eternal life. Had we a prospect by faith of a better and more excellent life, we should not be so over-fond of this life.

2. By way of *Exhortation*; to ex-
hort us all to put the duty of the Text in practice. Let us labour to lay bold on eternal life. Oh! let us labour to call up our hearts from *visible* things to *invisible*, from *present* things to *future*, from *momentary* things to *eternal*: the things of the other world are never the less real, because they are out of sight. Atheists think that eternal life and all future things are but a fiction; but we may use to

*In eternam
pennam sero
tandem cre-
dent, qui in
eternam
vitam cre-
dere nolu-
erunt. Cy-
prian.*

them that Speech of Cyprian : They shall believe too late to their eternal torment, who would not believe to eternal life. But let Atheists and Scoffers say what they please; we do know, or ought to know, that eternal life is the greatest reality. God that cannot lye, hath promised us eternal life, Titus 1. 2. The great promise of the Gospel is eternal life. 1 Job. 2. 25. This is the promise that he hath given to us, eternal life. Unless we make God to be a liar, we must take eternal life for the greatest reality. In the prosecution of this Use, I shall onely propound some Directions for the better putting in practice of this duty, to shew us how we ought to lay hold of eternal life.

1. Let us have great and admiring thoughts of eternal life : We should labour to have our hearts raised up with the consideration of the excellencie of this life. How great shall that happiness be, where there shall be no evil present, and no good shall be wanting ? where we shall be wholly taken up in the praises of God, and God shall be all in all; we shall see and love

*Quanta
erit illa fa-
licitas, ubi
nullum erit
malum, nul-
lum latebit
bonum ?
Aug. Civit.
Dei.*

love, love and praise, as *Austin* expresseth it. This natural life which now we live, is not worth the name of life in comparison of eternal life: nay, it deserves to be called a death, rather than a life; for we always carry about sin with us, which is the matter & cause of death. But in *eternal life* we shall not onely be free from sorrow, but from sin the cause of sorrow; yea, we shall be free from the possibility of sinning. Mans first happiness in the state of Innocencie, was *posse non peccare*, a power not to have sinned: His last happiness in Heaven, is *non posse peccare*, not to be able to sin at all: Though man in his first estate was endowed with such a power that he might not have sinned; yet it was possible for him to sin, and he did sin: but in *eternal life*, the will shall be so confirmed, as that there shall not be a possibility of sinning. Oh! how great will that happiness be, when the soul shall enjoy the sweetness of eternal joys without intermission? when the soul shall forget all its sins and sorrows, as to any sense or experience of them; yet not so as to be unthankful to him, who

hath been its Saviour and Deliverer.

2. We should breathe, long, and
aspire after eternal life. We should
elevate and lift up our hearts above
time and this lower world, & breathe
after the sweetness and delights of the
Heavenly Country. Those breath-
ings that are in the hearts of the
Saints after eternal things, give them
some taste of those things: *When we
thirst after heavenly things, saith a ju-
dicious Divine, we do always perceive
and experiment something of joy and
sweetness.* Those breathings that are
in the hearts of the Saints after eter-
nal life, are some of the first fruits of
the Spirit. *Rom. 8. 22. We our selves
which have the first fruits of the Spirit, e-
ven we our selves groan within our selves,
waiting for the adoption, the redemption
of our bodies.* Other men feel no such
longings and breathings as these are
for although there be a natural in-
stinct in all men which carries them
out to desire happiness, yet none but
the Saints long and breathe after the
enjoyment of God as their hap-
piness. Therefore so far as we finde a
thirst kindled in our souls after the
sight and enjoyment of God in eter-
nal

*Cum siti-
mus res coe-
lestes, cum
sentimus
perpetuū
aliquid
gaudii &
voluptatis.
Roloc. in
Joh.*

nal life; so far we have an earnest of eternal life in our souls. How great a thing should it be to us, to be admitted to the sight of the Divine Majesty! *to be taken up from the light of the Sun and Moon, to the light of him who made the Sun and the Moon; as Austin expresseth it.* It is a good observation of Luther: *How much joy is there when God doth exhibit by the Word one drop of consolation to such as are tempted and afflicted in conscience! but far greater and unexpressible will that joy be, when the God of all consolation shall reveal himself, and shall wholly pour himself forth unto us in eternal life.* How should we breathe after this life?

Thirdly, let us place our happiness, and expect it no where, but in eternal life. We should carry our hope and expectation above this world; and never expect to finde happiness, until we come to live with God in eternal life. *He shall be the end of our desires, who shall be seen without end, loved without nauseousness, praised without wearisomness.* This is life eternal, &c. It is a vain thing to expect happiness until we come to see God, and to live with him in his eternity. If the Lord make

ipse finis erit desideriorum nostrorum, qui sine fine videbitur, sine fastidio amabitur, sine fatigatione laudabitur.

our Aug.

our passage in any measure tolerable
 thorow this world, this is a mercy; if
 he give us any comfort in outward
 things in this world, these are mercies,
 so far as he is seen and loved in
 them: otherwise, the best comforts
 here on earth are pitiful things: for
 what can be truly good, from which
 the chief good is absent? *Deus est omnis boni bonum*; God is
 the good of every good; and nothing
 is good, but as he appears in it. But
 we ought to remember, that our true
 and great happiness is to live in the
Divine presence above, and to have
 the sight of God to eternity. And
 it is not possible that any soul that
 hath had one glimpse, or one true
 taste of him, should think any thing
 to be happiness short of that light.
 This therefore is to lay hold of eternal
 life, to keep our spirits aloof off
 from the world as much as may be,
 and to keep our spirits reserved for
 the enjoyment of God in eternal
 life. The enjoyment of God in eternal
 life, is the point and centre that
 we should be moving and tending
 unto. When the Lord gives us any
 of the comforts and blessings of this
 life;

life; when he gives us estates, friends, the comfort of relations; we should say, These are the gifts of God, and so far they are good; but these are not my happiness: my happiness is God himself; my happiness is to see him, and to live with him in his eternity. Here should our desires rest and terminate: and though we desire and use many things for necessity in the present state, yet our desire and expectation should be still carried above these things, and end no where but in the enjoyment of God. *What*

other end have we, but to come to that Kingdom, of which there is no end?

Fourthly, we should labour to be in a readiness and preparedness of spirit to enter upon eternal life. 2 Pet. 3. 14.

Be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace without spot and blame. Our

ambition should be, to be found in such a posture, and to keep our souls in such an holy evenness, as that nothing may impede or hinder our free passage out of Time into Eternity.

We should labour to keep our Consciences pure. We should see that the guilt of no sin remain upon our Conscience,

*Quis alius
noster est fi-
nis, nisi per-
venire ad
regnum coe-
lestis? Aug.*

science, unpardoned, unrepented of. We should see that our affections be not intangled with the inordinate love of lawful things, much less with the love of any sin. We should labour to have our hearts fortified with a stedfast belief of the things God hath promised us in the other world; the weakness of our faith in believing the things promised, makes us very unfit for the enjoyment of eternal life. We should often contemplate eternal life, we should be thinking of it night & day: all the comforts that we enjoy, all the necessary employments we are engaged in, should not take us off from the frequent meditation of eternal life. What so necessary to be thought of, as that state, which when once it is begun, shall never have an end. This whole life is but like one long dream, in comparison of eternal life. Oh! let us not forget eternal life, but be still preparing and making ready for it.

Fifthly, we should not *take up*, or *rest satisfied* with what we have already attained in grace; but press forward toward that which lies before

us, and is yet wanting to us. This is the direction the Apostle gives us from his own example, *Phil. 3. 13.* Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behinde, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ J. *su.* Paul's aim and scope was to obtain the prize: what prize was that? the prize of eternal glory. This is all one as to lay hold on eternal life. How would he do this? what course doth he take to attain this? He forgets the things that are behinde, and reacheth forth toward the things that are before. What are the things that are behinde? The progresses he had already made in Christianity, his former attainments in grace. He had some knowledge of Christ, some love to Christ, some assurance of Christ's love to him; he had done some service for Christ: Paul forgets these things; and what then? He presseth after those things that are before. What is that? He presseth after that knowledge, that love,

love, that obedience, that conformity to Christ, which he had not attained to. When we have attained most grace, most knowledge, most experience; yet there is more still to be attained. Now we should *inflexibly*, be stretching forth; (an emphatical word) *reaching forth, stretching forward, extending our selves*: do as Racers do when they are come near the mark, stretch forth themselves to reach the mark, and touch the gold. So should we be aspiring and breathing to come to as great a propinquity and nearness in our spirits in point of grace, to the future life, and the future state, as may be here on earth. We should strain hard to get as great a suitableness and conformity to the future life as may be.

Sixthly, we should pray that we may be in such a frame, as that we may be willing to leave this world, and to part with this life, that we may go to live with God in eternal life. We should be willing and content to live while God would have us live, and while he hath any work for us to do: but when our work is done,

ydone, and the Lord calls for us, we
 should not be so fond of this world,
 and of this life, but we should be
 willing to relinquish the one and the
 other, to go to live with God in his
 eternity. What can be to us that
 which God will be to us? Do we
 finde comfort in meat, in drink, in
 rayment, in friends, in riches, in ho-
 nous? God will be much more to
 us. *Whatsoever may lawfully or ho- nestly be desired by man, God will be that to us.* He will be life, health, sustenance, abundance, glory, honour, peace, and all good things. What good can there be wanting in him, from whom every thing that is good doth proceed? Whatsoever is sweet, amiable, pleasant, delectable in the creature, it all proceeds originally from God; and therefore he must needs be much more sweet, amiable, pleasant, delectable in himself. *Quod esset tale, est magis tale:* That which makes a thing to be what it is, is much more so in it self. It is an elegant passage I have met with in *Aristotle*. *These heavies which are transfused and brought down through the souls* *Pulera transjeda per animas in*